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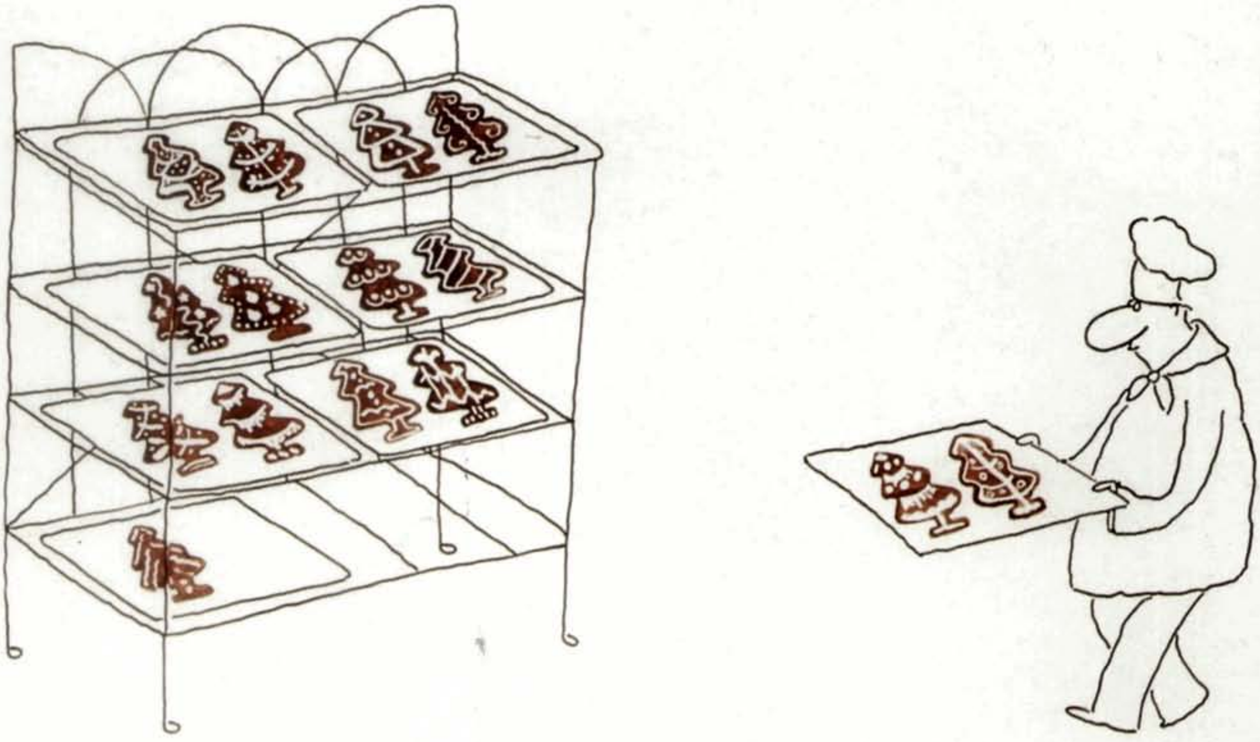

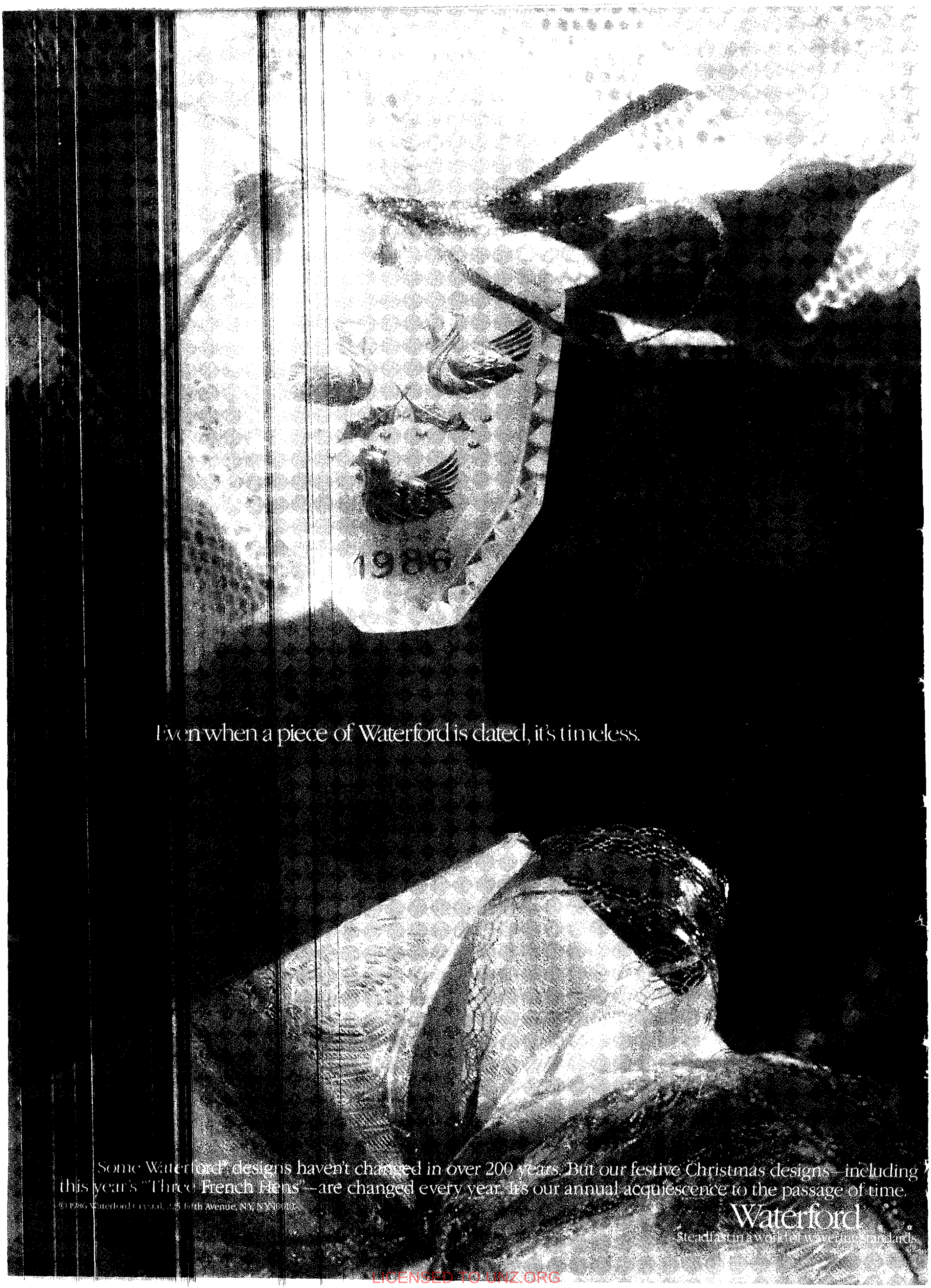

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Angry Housewives—A boring musical about four dissatisfied women who form a rock group. The closing number is funny, but there's a long, long wait. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/29/86.) (Minetta Lane, 18-22 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Arsenic and Old Lace—This revival of a 1941 Broadway hit has a big cast and an exceptionally fine set by Marjorie Bradley Kellogg. The subject is murder, mingled with Victorian good manners; the murder weapon is elderberry wine. (7/7/86) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Broadway Bound—A touching and unexpectedly serious study of a family—presumably the playwright's—as it begins to fall apart in Brooklyn in the nineteen-forties. Neil Simon retains his accustomed skill at comedy but has wisely suppressed his weakness for surefire gags. Linda Lavin is superb as the troubled mother; also in the cast are Jonathan Silverman, Philip Sterling, John Randolph, Jason Alexander, and Phyllis Newman. Gene Saks directed. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Coastal Disturbances—Tina Howe's funny and beautiful play about love is set on a private beach on Massachusetts' North Shore. Annette Bening, as a photographer from this city, and Timothy Daly, as a lifeguard, are the beguiling lovers, and among the other actors, as summer people, are Rosemary Murphy, Jonas Abry, Heather Mac Rae, and Ronald Guttman. Tony Straiges and Dennis Parichy designed the distinguished setting and lighting. Carole Rothman was the able director. (12/1/86) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2. Closes Thursday, Jan. 1.)

The Colored Museum—A sharp, satiric revue on the subject of blackness and related matters, which is almost done in by damnable sound amplification. George C. Wolfe was the clever writer, and L. Kenneth Richardson the able director. The performers, all of them splendid, are Loretta Devine, Tommy Hollis, Reggie Montgomery, Vickilyn Reynolds, and Danitra Vance. (11/10/86) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Common Pursuit—An English import. Six Cambridge undergraduates, in the sixties, plan to launch a literary magazine in accordance with the rigorous standards of the critic F. R. Leavis, and in the ensuing twenty years manage to breach these standards. Simon Gray's play, while not especially original, is consistently entertaining, and it is very well performed, under the direction of the dramatist and Michael McGuire. With Kristoffer Tabori and Dylan Baker, among others. (11/3/86) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Double Image Theatre—Boyd Gaines in THE DOUBLE BASS, a one-character comedy by Patrick Süskind, translated from the German by Eric Overmyer and Harry Newman. (304 W. 47th St. 265-0794. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Dec. 28.)

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Epic Proportions—A comedy by Larry Coen and David Crane, presented by the Manhattan Punch Line. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Wednesday, Dec. 31.)

Equity Library Theatre—The third in this season's series of eight productions is a revival of Lucille Fletcher's 1972 play, NIGHT WATCH. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Dec. 21. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

The Front Page—A melodrama can be both trashy and irresistible, and Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur accomplished this feat in their account of life on a Chicago newspaper in the nineteen-twenties. The stars are Richard Thomas and John Lithgow, and their raucous shoutings emerge as a very peculiar love affair indeed. (12/1/86) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

A Girl's Guide to Chaos—A comedy by Cynthia Heimel. Preview Wednesday, Dec. 10. Opens officially on Thursday, Dec. 11. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Groucho: A Life in Revue—A surprisingly lively and touching show about the great comedian/humorist. Frank Ferrante's dedicated impersonation becomes a true performance; Les Marsden, doubling, comes close to Chico and seems inspired as Harpo; and Faith Prince deftly acts the women in their lives, among them, of course, Margaret Dumont. Arthur Marx (son of Groucho) and Robert Fisher were the playwrights; Mr. Marx directed. (10/20/86) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Have I Got a Girl for You!—A ham-fisted musical takeoff on "Frankenstein" and other horror movies of the thirties and forties. For camp followers only. (Second Avenue

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Theatre, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St. 674-1460. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The House of Blue Leaves—A superb revival of John Guare's brilliant, ferocious comedy, with Swoosie Kurtz and John Mahoney, among other fine performers. Jerry Zaks was the acute, perceptive director. (3/31/86) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill—A play of sorts about one of Billie Holiday's last engagements, at a night club in Philadelphia, well sung and performed by the personable Lonette McKee, who bears no resemblance—vocal, physical, or temperamental—to the late Miss Holiday. (9/29/86) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Lambs Theatre Company—A return engagement of **THE GIFTS OF THE MAGI**, a musical adapted from two short stories by O. Henry. Randy Courts composed the music and Mark St. Germain provided the book and lyrics. (Little Theatre at the Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Victor Herbert's **BABES IN TOYLAND.** (Eastside, 334 E. 74th St. 861-2287. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

Lily Dale—This play is one of Horton Foote's chronicles of Texas before the First World War. Don Bloomfield is in the role of a young man who pays a visit to his mother and sister in Houston, Molly Ringwald is the sister, and Greg Zittel is their abrasive stepfather. (12/1/86) (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2826. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Me and My Girl—Robert Lindsay brings to life a silly chestnut of a British musical, dating back to the thirties. Jim Dale will fill in for Mr. Lindsay during the week starting Tuesday, Dec. 16. (8/25/86) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 947-0033. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Oh Coward!—A three-person revue in homage to Noël Coward, who saw and enjoyed this show in its first production, fourteen years ago. The compiler of the material and the star of the show is Roderick Cook. (12/1/86) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Olympus on My Mind—A larky little musical based on the Amphitryon legend. Music by Grant Sturiale and words (book and lyrics) by Barry Harman, who also directed. (8/18/86) (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Shogun Macbeth—Shakespeare's play, set in thirteenth-century Japan, with Ernest Abuba and Freda Foh Shen. A presentation of the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. (Playhouse 46, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Wednesday through Friday, Dec. 10-12, at 8; Saturdays and Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 2 and 8; Tuesday, Dec. 16, at noon and 8; and Thursday, Dec. 18, at noon. Closes Saturday, Dec. 20.)

Smile—A musical about a teen-age beauty contest, based on a movie on the same topic, which is nothing to smile about. Marvin Hamlisch wrote the music and Howard Ashman wrote the book and lyrics. (12/1/86) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 575-9200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Social Security—A comedy by Andrew Bergman, directed by Mike Nichols. (4/28/86) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

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Stardust—A revue featuring songs by lyricist Mitchell Parish and his many collaborators, including Hoagy Carmichael, Duke Ellington, and Glenn Miller. Conceived and directed by Albert Harris. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Dec. 21.)

Sweet Charity—A revival of a musical that has come to seem an American classic. Bob Fosse is the director and choreographer, Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields provided the songs, and the scenery is by Robert Randolph. Ann Reinking stars. Hurrah for them all. (5/12/86) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Wild Honey—A comedy by Michael Frayn, based on Chekhov's "Platanov." A London import; Ian McKellen is the star and Christopher Morahan the director. Previews through Wednesday, Dec. 17. Opens officially on Thursday, Dec. 18. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 977-9370. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

You Never Can Tell—All Shaw delights, and absolute Shaw delights absolutely. This minor early work is full of commensurately minor pleasures, with two or three exceptionally attractive performances. In the cast are Victor Garber, Lise Hilboldt, John Cullum, Stephen McHattie, Stefan Gierasch, Uta Hagen, John David Cullum, and Amanda Plummer. (10/20/86) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BIG RIVER:** A musical about Huckleberry Finn and Jim and their adventures on the Mississippi. The large cast is full of charm and so is the scenery, by Heidi Landesman. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A big, handsomely designed and handsomely costumed musical. The book, by Harvey Fierstein, is sentimental nonsense, but the music, by Jerry Herman, is pleasantly tuneful. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** A musical version of T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats." Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, choreography by Gillian Lynne, and direction (and some lyrics) by Trevor Nunn. A superb spectacle, which may run for many more years and give cats the right to vote and hold office. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DROOD:** Charles Dickens' unfinished novel, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," served as a basis for this jolly, silly musical, with charming songs by Rupert Holmes, an excellent cast headed by George Rose, and uninhibited direction by Wilford Leach. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 11,080 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Pleasantly old-fashioned choreography by the late Gower Champion and a few classic songs enliven an otherwise inert pastiche of the Warner Brothers movie that made Ruby Keeler a star. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I'M NOT RAPPAPORT:** Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park, starring Hal Linden and Ossie Davis. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **PENN & TELLER:** A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Thursdays and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

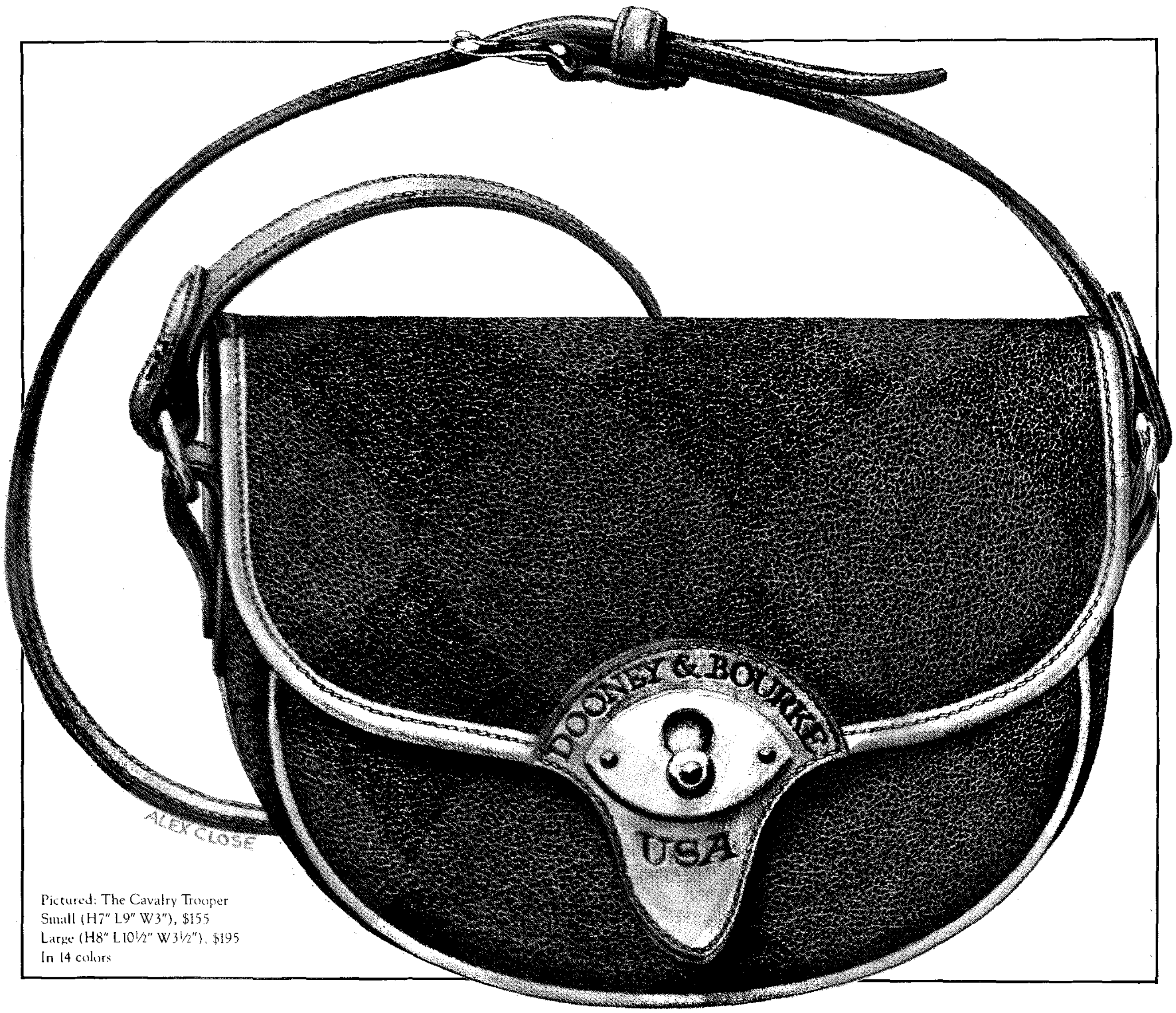
MISCELLANY

Next Wave Festival—Final offering of the fourth annual celebration at BAM—The Rome Section, the concluding portion of "The Civil Wars;" music composed by Philip Glass and text by Robert Wilson and Maita de Niscemi. Performed by five vocal soloists, an offstage chorus, a gospel octet, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic, Bruce Ferden conducting. Conception and direction by Mr. Wilson. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 7, and Tuesday, Dec. 16, Thursday, Dec. 18, and Saturday, Dec. 20, all at 8. Through Tuesday, Dec. 30.)

Radio City Music Hall—The annual Christmas show, with, of course, the Rockettes. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Thursday, Dec. 11, at 11 and 2:30; Friday, Dec. 12, at 2:30 and 7:30; Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 13-14, and Friday and Saturday, Dec. 19-20, at 10, 1:30, 5, and 8:30; and Monday through Thursday, Dec. 15-18, at 11, 2:30, and 7:30. Through Thursday, Jan. 8.)

Big Apple Circus—A one-ring tent circus. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. Wednesdays, Dec. 10 and 17, and Friday, Dec. 19, at 2 and 7:30; Thursdays, Dec. 11 and 18, and Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 11 and 7:30; Friday, Dec. 12, at 1 and 7:30; Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 13-14, at 12:30 and 4; and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 12:30, 4, and 8. Through Sunday, Jan. 4. For information about tickets, call 391-0767.)

Benefit Concert—Christmas music from Broadway shows, performed by Gretchen Cryer, Jerry Herman, Leilani Jones, and Cy Coleman, among others. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Monday, Dec.



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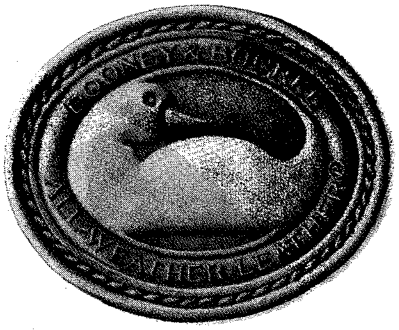

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DANCE

New York City Ballet—Performances of "The Nutcracker" are being presented through Sunday, Jan. 4. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 6, and Fridays and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 1 and 5. Season continues through Sunday, Feb. 22.)

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre—Wednesday evening, Dec. 10: "The Lark Ascending," "Love Songs," "For Bird with Love," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Dec. 11: "The Lark Ascending," "Witness," "Bad Blood," and "Caverna Magica." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Dec. 12: "The Stack-Up," "Cry," "Suite Otis," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Dec. 13: "Divining," "Treading," "Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Dec. 13: "Speeds," "Bad Blood," and "Caverna Magica." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, Dec. 14: "The Lark Ascending," "Cry," "Survivors" (with guest artists Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln), and "For Bird with Love." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Dec. 16: "Memoria," "Caverna Magica," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Dec. 17: "Divining," "Cry," "For Bird with Love," and "The Stack-Up." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Dec. 18: "The Lark Ascending," "Witness," "Night Shade," and "Memoria." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Dec. 19: "Concerto in F," "Bad Blood," and "Caverna Magica." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Dec. 20: "Night Creature," "Love Songs," "Survivors" (with guest artists Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln), and "For Bird with Love." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Dec. 20: "The Lark Ascending," "Witness," "Night Shade," and "Memoria." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Evenings at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, Dec. 28.)

Nikolais Dance Theatre—Opening performances of a three-week engagement that will run through Sunday, Jan. 4—Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 7:30, and Thursday, Dec. 18, and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8: "Crucible" (New York première), "Tensile Involvement," excerpts from "Kaleidoscope," and "Graph" (New York première). . . . ¶ Wednesday, Dec. 17, and Friday, Dec. 19, at 8, and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 2: "Noumenon," "Contact" (New York première), "Video Game," "Study of the Human Figure," and "Count Down." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Ballet Español de Madrid—A sixteen-member troupe, appearing here for the first time. (John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. 967-9077. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Through Sunday, Dec. 14.)

Pilar Rioja—Performances of Spanish dance. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Thursday, Dec. 11, at 8; Saturdays at 3; Sundays at 7; and Tuesday through Friday, Dec. 16-19, at 8. Through Sunday, Dec. 21.)

Bebe Miller: Dance—A two-week engagement of contemporary dance. With guest artist Ralph Lemon the second week. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Mondays and Thursdays through Saturdays at 8; and Sundays at 3. Through Monday, Dec. 22.)

Sunayana—A program of kathak dances of northern India. (Uris Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 2:30. For information about tickets, call 362-3366.)

Dennis Wayne's Dancers—A one-week engagement—Monday, Dec. 15, at 7:30, and Thursday and Friday, Dec. 18-19, at 8: Program A. . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 16-17, and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8: Program B. . . . ¶ Sunday, Dec. 21, at 4:30: Program C. (Triplex Theatre, 199 Chambers St. 618-1980.)

NIGHT LIFE

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(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Abilene Café, 359 Second Ave., at 21st St. (473-8908)—A corner bar and restaurant that makes a polite bow in the direction of Texas (its flag flies here) and presents music that is practiced just about everywhere in the Union (the blues). Memphis-born piano thumper **Rosco Gordon** plays here on Thursday, Dec. 11; on Friday, Dec. 12, **Sammy Price**, a boogie-woogie specialist who started out, in the twenties, as a dancer with Alphonso Trent's orchestra, will be at the upright; and on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 19-20, the keyboard will be in the hands of **Pinetop Perkins.** Music from nine.

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—In the lobby, people come and go talking of the Forty-fourth Street Chowder and Marching Club (which used to meet here) and of the Thanatopsis Club (which also used to meet here) and of **Julie Wilson**, who is singing here, in the candlelit mead hall known as the Oak Room. Most of her current program is devoted to Rodgers and Hart. Shows at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining.

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautically appointed bar and restaurant. Any swaying you may notice yourself doing is probably generated by the musicians, who perform amidships on a railed-in platform. **Michele Hendricks**, the daughter of whiz-bang vocalist Jon Hendricks, sings with her trio on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12-13; and on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 19-20, a father-and-son guitar team, **Bucky** and **John Pizzarelli**, comes aboard. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek, carpeted, neat-as-a-pin music room, which is also hushed and smokeless during **Blossom Dearie's** early-bird concerts. She sings her first note at six-thirty Wednesdays through Saturdays. At nine Tuesdays through Saturdays, Rita Gardner sings a slew of songs from the twenties, and at eleven on Saturdays Laurie Beechman, one of the cats in "Cats," sings contemporary pop and Broadway show tunes.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—On the back wall of this club, there is a little neon version of the Manhattan skyline, with a crescent moon and two stars attendant upon it—one of the best examples of inert-gas folk art we know of. Trumpeter **Freddie Hubbard** directs his quintet through Sunday, Dec. 14, and starting Tuesday, Dec. 16, pianist **Monty Alexander's** trio, along with **John Collins** (Nat King Cole's longtime guitarist) and **Harry Edison** (the great Basie-band trumpeter who recorded with Cole in the fifties), will celebrate the music of Nat King Cole. Music from nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Rock, jazz, folk, comedy, and combinations thereof. Wednesdays, **Buster Poindexter & the Banshees of Blue**; Thursday, Dec. 11, Phil Ochs Song Night, with **Ronnie Gilbert** (of the Weavers), the witty, un-Ochsian **Christine Lavin**, and other folkies; Friday through Sunday, Dec. 12-14, cool, polished new-wave folkie **Suzanne Vega**; Thursday, Dec. 18, tenor saxophonist **Branford Marsalis** and his band; and Friday and Saturday, Dec. 19-20, Canadian folksisters **Kate & Anna McGarrigle.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A crowded, duskily lit neighborhood bar, where first-rate pianists and bassists compete for your ear with professional conversationalists. Truth and beauty usually prevail. **Ronnie Mathews**, an admirer of Monk and Bud Powell, works with **Ray Drummond** through Saturday, Dec. 13, and on Sunday, Dec. 14, they will be joined by the painter Larry Rivers, who moonlights as a saxophonist. Starting Monday, Dec. 15, pianist **John O'Neal** teams up with Mr. Drummond. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Everything about this club is nice: the long rows of tables covered with pink linen, the bijou bandstand, the view from the bar of the bandstand, and the view out the window of Vaux & Withers' gabled Victorian courthouse. Multireed man Joey Cavaseno performs with his quintet through Sunday, Dec. 14, and on Tuesday, Dec. 16, **Cecil Taylor**—a pianist who is, as his fellow-visionary Walt Whitman said of himself, "free, fresh, savage, fluent, luxuriant"—moves in with his six-person **unit.** Music from nine nightly, except Mondays.

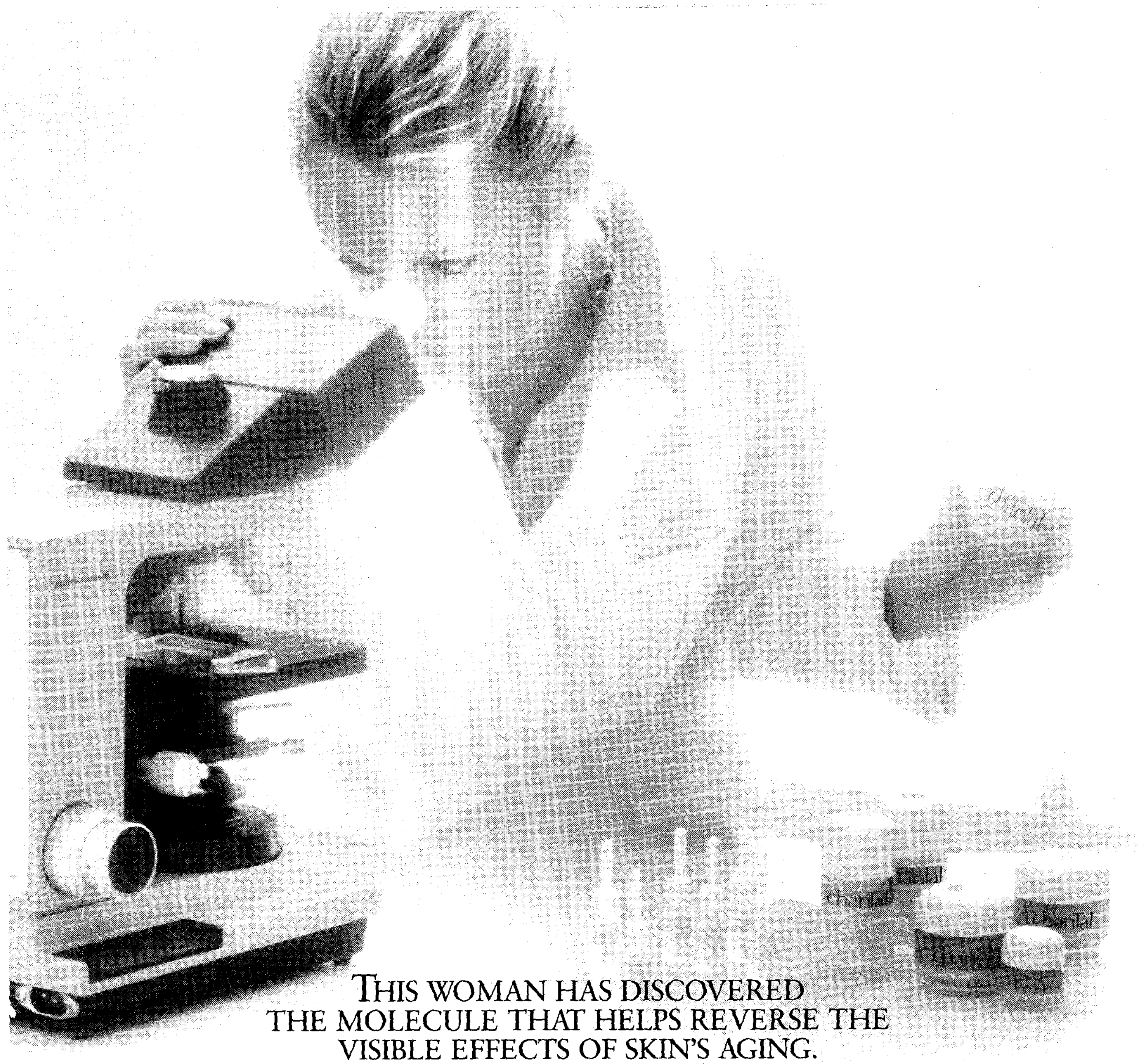
Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**Bobby Short** is at his post in the Café Carlyle, singing and playing the piano and touching off mirth and jubilation in his audience. **Beverly Peer** (bass fiddle) and **Robbie Scott** (drums) are his trusty sidekicks. Sets at ten and midnight Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, you can listen to pianist and singer **Barbara Carroll** Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-forty-five.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through a heavy-duty steel door, down a long, narrow, fun-house passageway (mirrors in which you can watch yourself multiply; corrugated-metal siding that you can riffle), and down a flight of stairs, you'll find this velvet-and-mirror-walled *boîte.* **Astrud Gilberto's** cool, light, ripple-free voice can be heard here through Sunday, Dec. 14, and starting Tuesday, Dec. 16, Old Master **Dizzy Gillespie** will give lessons in ebullience. On Mondays, **Les Paul** plugs in his guitar and plays with his trio. Music from eight Tuesdays through Sundays, and from nine on Mondays. Dining.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—Once a truck warehouse, this SoHo establishment now provides space for palm trees to mature in and for non-trucking types to eat and drink and listen to good pianists. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 13-14, **Kuni Mikami** (with bassist **Vishnu Wood**); Monday, Dec. 15, Peter Malinverni; and Wednesday through Saturday, Dec. 17-20, **Armen Donelian.** Sets begin at seven Mondays through Thursdays, at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays, and at six on Sundays. Closed Wednesday, Dec. 10; Friday, Dec. 12; and Tuesday, Dec. 16.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Turn-of-the-century New York Sunday *Herald* posters and Hirschfeld caricatures on the walls, and, next to the brass-railed partition between the bar and the dining room, a modern Steinway. Pianist **Don Friedman** and bassist **Harvie Swartz** collaborate through Saturday, Dec. 13, and on Tuesday, Dec. 16, **Bill Mays** and **Ron Carter** will go to work. Esther Blue flies all by herself on Sundays and Mondays. Music from about nine-thirty.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Texas-like in significant respects, though not in the open-spaces-and-clear-sight-lines department, in which it is New York-like. Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12-13, Pure Prairie League; Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 16-17, skinny, fulminating young



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

British folk-rocker **BILLY BRAGG**; and Friday, Dec. 19, **FATS DOMINO**, the genial, rotund granddaddy of rock and roll (New Orleans wing). Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—From the glassed-in streetside room you can see the naked saplings in the adjacent office-tower frontage, and in the back room you can see Jonathan Schwartz, the urbane singer and raconteur who is leading a symposium entitled "All Hart." Bobbi Rogers is his guest through Saturday, Dec. 13, and on Tuesday, Dec. 16, **MARK MURPHY** will join him. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A popular, north-of-chic upper West Side gathering place. Jazz, Latin jazz, and rhythm and blues are what the people come inside for. On Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12-13, **ART BLAKEY** and his winged crew of **JAZZ MESSENGERS** deliver hard bop, and on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 19-20, soul singer **CISSY HOUSTON** will step forward. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock from the fifties to the eighties in a half-century-old ballroom. Thursday, Dec. 11, Everything but the Girl; Friday, Dec. 12, Red Hot Chili Peppers; Saturday, Dec. 13, **LONE JUSTICE**; Wednesday, Dec. 17, the Communards; Friday, Dec. 19, **JASON & THE SCORCHERS**; and Saturday, Dec. 20, Ian Hunter. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven. Dancing.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Exotic, head-swirling music from Brazil and elsewhere in an exotic *carnaval* setting. Wednesday, Dec. 10, **BABA OLATUNJI** and his sixteen-member drumming and dancing troupe; Thursday, Dec. 11, the **SKATALITES**; Saturdays, **LOREMIL MACHADO & SARAVA**; Wednesday, Dec. 17, at ten-thirty, Dominican saxophonist **MARIO RIVERA & THE SALSA REFUGEES**; and Friday, Dec. 19, Tabou Combo. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from eleven on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Crowded and convivial. **ABDULLAH IBRAHIM**, the South African-born pianist and composer, guides his lilting septet, **EKAYA**, through Sunday, Dec. 14, and starting Tuesday, Dec. 16, **DAVID MURRAY'S OCTET**, one of the liveliest ensembles in town, will be on the bandstand. On Mondays, the **GIL EVANS ORCHESTRA**, with its white-haired leader at the electric piano, delivers shimmering sound-pictures of pieces by Hancock, Mingus, Hendrix, and others. Shows from about ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A low-ceilinged, plain-but-functional blues and rock outpost. The decorative flourishes include pictures of Big Joe Turner, a Mets pennant, roadhouse neon, and a cat, which can sometimes be found atop the jukebox. The schedule: Wednesday, Dec. 10, guitarist **VERNON REID'S LIVING COLOUR**; Thursday, Dec. 11, the Mosquitos; Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12-13, honking, acrobatic tenor saxophonist **BIG JAY MC NEELY**; Wednesday, Dec. 17, the Ordinaires; and Thursday, Dec. 18, **ELLIOTT MURPHY**. Music after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the Terrace Bar, you can keep an eye on Village street life and listen to the formidable Polish pianist **ADAM MAKOWICZ** and bassist **JAMIL NASSER** every night but Monday, when **GAIL WYNTERS**, a robust gospel-rooted singer from Kentucky, cuts loose with her duo. On Tuesdays, jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** and her trio are also present. Music from about ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This hallowed establishment has been receiving jazz pilgrims from all over the world for more than half a century. **FRANK MORGAN**—a California-based alto saxophonist who grew up in the bebop era under the influence of Charlie Parker—plays here through Sunday, Dec. 14. **CEDAR WALTON** (piano), **BUSTER WILLIAMS** (bass), and **BILLY HIGGINS** (drums) support him. On Tuesday, Dec. 16, high-speed tenor saxophonist **JOHNNY GRIFFIN** brings in his quartet. Mondays are the property of the crisp, swinging **MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA**. Music after ten.

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WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Those who can resist the temptations of the large barroom here—pinball, the EnduroRacer, a dialogue with a budding logical positivist from Columbia U.—will find another, smaller room, where jazz musicians hold sway. The lineup: through Sunday, Dec. 14, drummer Chip White's ensemble, with vocalist Vanessa Davis; Tuesday, Dec. 16, the Steve Bargonetti Trine; and starting Wednesday, Dec. 17, alto saxophonist **LOU DONALDSON'S** trio. Mondays are comedy nights. Shows nightly from about nine. Dining.

WHIPPOORWILL, 18 E. 18th St. (675-7100)—The entryway to this downstairs club buzzes with black lights, the anteroom features a mural and a chaise longue on which to contemplate it, and the music-and-dining room has jazz. **CHET BAKER**, a soft-toned, ruminative trumpeter and singer, leads his trio through Sunday, Dec. 14, and starting Tuesday, Dec. 16, **LESTER BOWIE**, an extroverted, haute-gutbucket trumpeter, will be here with his quartet. Music from about nine-thirty. . . . ¶ The roomy upstairs bar and restaurant, called Joanna (675-7900), has big mirrors, photomurals of flowers, real flower-size flowers, and a grand piano. **KENNY KIRKLAND** operates on it (with bassist **ALEX BLAKE** at his side) through Sunday, Dec. 14, and on Tuesday, Dec. 16, the bedazzling **KENNY BARRON** will take charge. **HUGH LAWSON** handles the Monday-night shift. Music from nine-thirty.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, airy bar connected to a spacious, airy dining room by a spacious, airy passageway with tables and chairs and expert musicians in it. Guitarist **TAL FARLOW**, who is stirring whether he plays at breakneck speed or at a more relaxed gait, works with bassist **GARY MAZZAROPPI** Mondays through Saturdays. On Sundays, guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** play their own beautiful and swinging brand of chamber jazz. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

HIGHLIGHTS IN JAZZ—Roy Eldridge, Marlene VerPlanck, Jay Leonhart, John Pizzarelli, and others. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. Thursday, Dec. 11, at 8. For information about tickets, call 598-2027.)

WORLD CHAMBER MUSIC ENSEMBLE & BRIAN SMITH SEXTET—Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Thursday, Dec. 11, at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 219-2845.

MUSIC OF GEORGE GERSHWIN—With Judy Niemack and Arthur Siegal. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-2200. Friday, Dec. 12, at 8.)

VERNEL FOURNIER TRIO—With Masaki (Papi) Sato. (Jazz Cultural Theatre, Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th Sts. 502-4300. Saturday, Dec. 13, at 10, 11:30, and 1.)

TRIBUTE TO ZOOT SIMS—Lionel Hampton, Gerry Mulligan, Major Holley, Mel Lewis, John Bunch, and others in a benefit concert. (New School Auditorium, 66 W. 12th St. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 7. For tickets, call 741-8950.)

PIERSON ORCHESTRA—Jazz Center of New York, 380 Lafayette St. 505-5660. Monday, Dec. 15, at 9 and 10:30.

PAUL WINTER CONSORT—Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Thursday and Friday, Dec. 18-19, at 8, and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 2 and 8.

CYNDI LAUPER—With Eddie Money. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Friday, Dec. 19, at 8.)

MAX MORATH—Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 832-2240. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 7 and 10; and Saturdays at 9. Matinées Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, Dec. 21.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

HANK BLAUSTEIN—Drawings and watercolors by an artist who has been a contributor to this magazine. Through Jan. 3. (A. M. Adler, 21 E. 67th St.)

MAUREEN CONNOR—Boat-shaped sculptures (free-standing and mounted on wall shelves) and preparatory drawings. Through Dec. 30. (Kren, 22 E. 65th St.)

ROBERT CUMMING—Recent sculptures and works on paper. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Castelli Graphics, 4 E. 77th St.)

NANCY GRAVES—Gouaches and pastels. Through Jan. 3. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

BRIAN YOSHIMI ISOBE / MARION LERNER LEVINE—Abstractions on paper. / Still-lifes in watercolors. Through Jan. 7. (Perlow, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

JULIO LARRAZ—Pastels and watercolors. Through Dec. 23. (Haime, 1000 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Open Mondays.)

MALCOLM MORLEY—Paintings from the past two years. Through Dec. 30. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

JACKSON POLLOCK (1912-56)—Paintings and drawings from the early forties. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

HERK VAN TONGEREN—Tabletop-size bronze sculptures of classical doorways, arches, and columns, among which spheres, cones, and other geometrical forms are posed. Through Saturday, Dec. 13. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **ACA**, 21 E. 67th St.: Boxes and assemblages by contemporary artists Donald Lipski, Aimee Rankin, Lynne Clibanoff, Lucas Samaras, and others who have followed in the footsteps of Joseph Cornell. Through Jan. 10. . . . **FORUM**, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: Collages by eighteen artists, Betye Saar, Joseph Glasco, and Romare Bearden among them. Through Dec. 31. . . . **GALDY**, 19 E. 71st St.: "The Brueghel Family and the Golden Age of Flemish Painting," including works by Pieter the Younger and Jan the Younger. Through Tuesday, Dec. 16. (Open Mondays.) . . . **KOUROS**, 23 E. 73rd St.: Paintings and sculptures by the Latin-American abstractionist Joaquín Torres-García and by his sons, Horacio and Augusto, not to mention artists who studied with Joaquín, among them Gonzalo Fonseca and José Gurvich. Through Dec. 31. . . . **PERLS**, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.: Six jaunty Miró sculptures, all in bronze, along with paintings and drawings by Picasso, Matisse, Léger, Modigliani, and others. Through Dec. 23. . . . **SCHLESINGER-BOISANTÉ**, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.: "The Layered Image," paintings, constructions, and photographs by Christopher Hewat, Roberto Juarez, Barbara Kruger, Bruce Kurland, Justen Ladda, and Suzan Pitt. Through Jan. 14. . . . **WILLARD**, 29 E. 72nd St.: Photographs of still-lifes by Alison Rossiter and drawings by Glenn Goldberg, Carol Wainio, Masami Teraoka, and others. Through Dec. 24.

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

JOHN ALEXANDER / OSKAR KOKOSCHKA (1886-1980)—Paintings. / Watercolors and drawings in a show that complements a retrospec-

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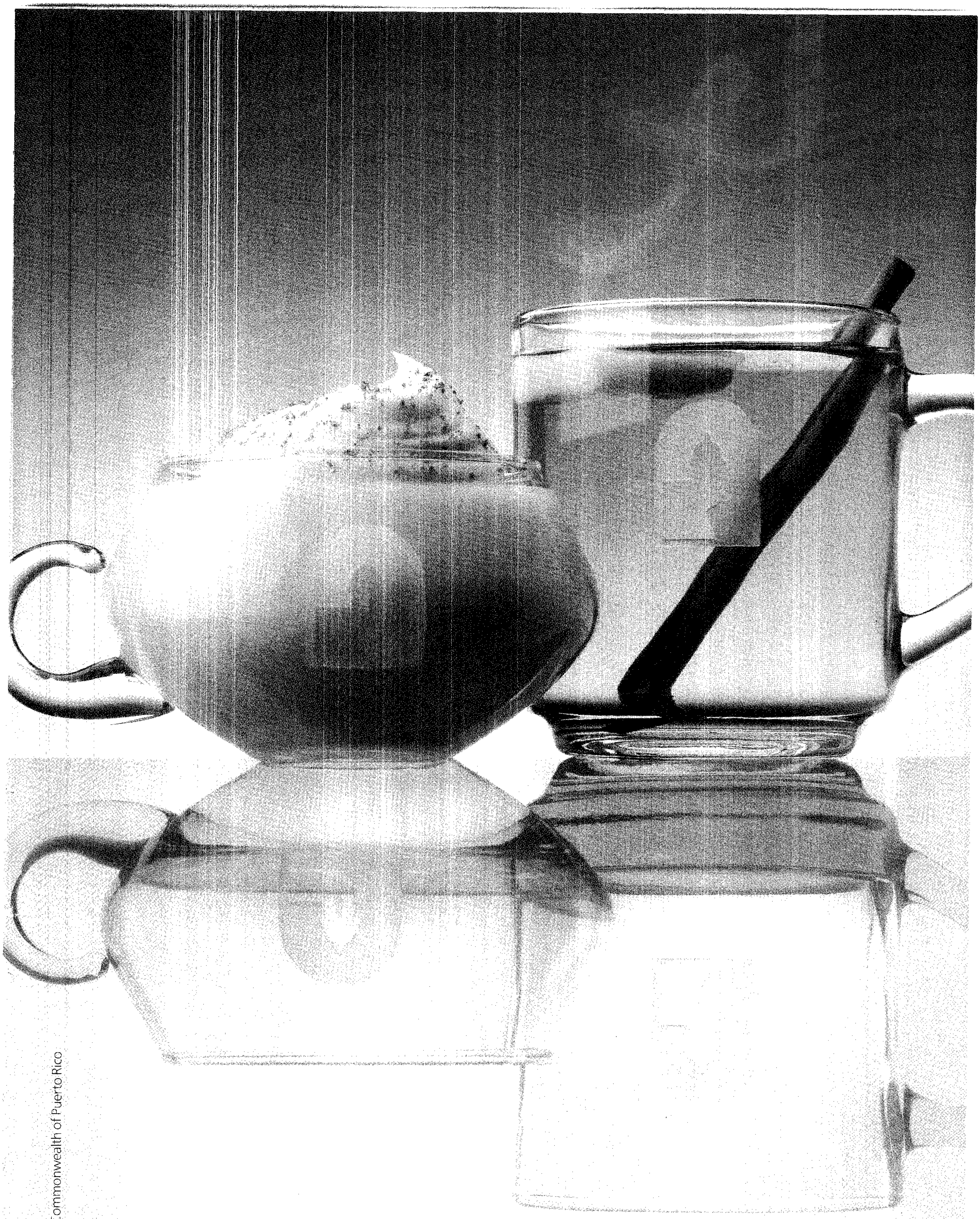

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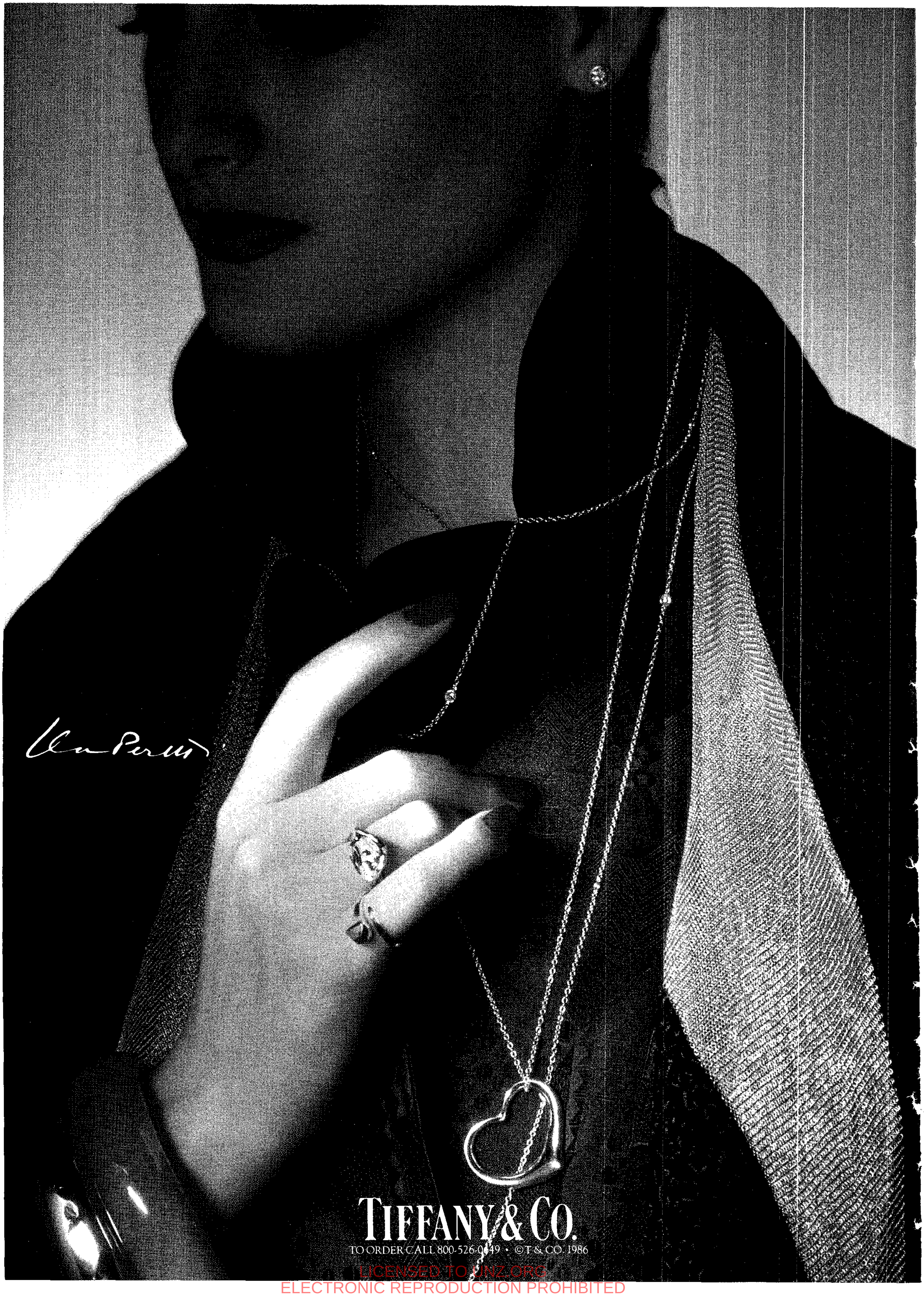TIFFANY & CO.

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tive at the Guggenheim Museum. Through Jan. 3. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Benny Andrews / March Avery—Portraits of Alice Neel, Romare Bearden, and others. / Watercolors cataloguing the artist's summer of 1986: Union Square, Rome, the Massachusetts shore. Through Dec. 30. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

Isabel Bishop—Drawings and etchings that date from the twenties to the forties and that have not been on exhibition before now. Through Jan. 17. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Warren Brandt / Jim Weidle—Representational still-lifes, landscapes, and nudes. / Watercolor landscapes that are full of detail. Through Dec. 31. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

Joseph Cornell (1903-72)—Box constructions and collages that were in the artist's personal collection. Through Jan. 31. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979)—Lithographs from the sixties and seventies. Through Jan. 23. (Zarre, 41 E. 57th St.)

Federico Fellini—Working drawings in felt-tip pen for "La Dolce Vita," "Amarcord," and other films. Through Saturday, Dec. 13. (Matisse, 41 E. 57th St.)

Lucio Fontana (1899-1968)—Paintings and sculptures, mostly from the fifties. Through Dec. 24. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

Mary Frank—A large color monoprint of six dancing figures, a bronze head, chimeras portrayed in papier-mâché or terra-cotta sculptures and on paper, and more. Through Saturday, Dec. 13. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

David Hockney—This artist, who experiments with everything, has tested the copying machine—under controlled conditions, of course—and produced thirty-three color prints, which he calls, contrarily, "home-made prints." Through Jan. 3. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Arata Isozaki—Architectural drawings of several of his projects, including his designs for a new wing for the Brooklyn Museum. Through Jan. 3. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

William King—A new group of his elongated, high-pocketed sculptured figures, all of them freestanding and overbearingly nonchalant. Through Dec. 31. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Robert M. Kulicke—Oils and monotypes by Mr. Kulicke, and jewelry by him in collaboration with Bessie Jamieson. Through Dec. 24. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

David Lund—Landscapes of Maine and Italy that the artist paints from memory. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

René Magritte (1898-1967)—A sizable group of characteristic paintings, such as a crystal goblet brimming over with cumulus clouds. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St.)

John Marin (1870-1953)—Small watercolors, suggesting, in short brushstrokes, city life, sailing, figures, etc. Through Saturday, Dec. 13. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Louisa Matthiasdottir—Recent paintings of still-lifes and Icelandic landscapes. Through Jan. 7. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Alice Neel (1900-84)—Works on paper. Through Jan. 3. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Linda Peer—Bright-colored heads, of wood and fired clay, some topped with headdresses. Through Saturday, Dec. 13. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

Eric Sloane (1905-85)—Oils. Through Jan. 8. (Hammer, 33 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Richard Tuttle / Jeff Gompertz—Painted sculptures. / New paintings. Through Jan. 3. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **de nagy**, 41 W. 57th St.: Paintings and sculptures with religious motifs by artists Jim Butler, Archie Rand, Luz Zeiner, Adolph Rosenblatt, and others. Through Jan. 3. . . . **galerie st. etienne**, 24 W. 57th St.: Works by Oskar Kokoschka and his contemporaries. Through Jan. 31. . . . **luhring augustine & hodes**, 41 E. 57th St.: Contemporary German works—photographic installations by Bernd and Hilla Becher and Günther Förg, and architectural sculptures by Reinhard Mucha. Through Saturday, Dec. 20.

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GALLERIES—SoHo

Marina Abramovic and Ulay—Large-scale photographs, mostly of shadows cast by gracefully posed people, plus a video showing a wrinkled hand doing a Chinese therapeutic exercise in which three lacquered walnuts are rolled around in the palm, Queeg-like. Through Jan. 3. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Eleanor Antin—An installation evoking, in theatre-set form, a theatre, a backstage dressing room, and a train, each of which houses a film in which Miss Antin portrays Eleanora Antinova, former Ballets Russes principal down on her luck. Through Jan. 3. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Alice Aycock—Recent sculptures, motorized, plus large drawings. One sculpture, entitled "The Dice Game—for Diverse Visions," is a sort of glorified roulette wheel spinning in front of a mirror. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Deborah Butterfield—Nine life-size found-metal sculptures of horses. Through Jan. 24. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Paul Caranicas / Dan Sinclair—Recent paintings of Second World War artillery bunkers, depicted as integral parts of the landscape. / Small abstract sculptures. Through Dec. 30. (Schreiber-Cutler, 171 Spring St.)

Francesco Clemente—Eighty-eight self-portraits done in monotypes and expressing the artist's hopes, fears, and libido. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Papo Colo—Recent paintings and sculptures. Through Dec. 27. (Esman, 70 Greene St.) . . . ¶ A ten-year retrospective. Through Dec. 31. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

Jiří Georg Dokoupil—Large, more or less religious paintings derived from ancient illuminations, plus a series of relatively small bronzes spelling out, in mock adulation, such potent names as Exxon, PaineWebber, and Guggenheim. Plus a couple of big paintings that spell MOMA and Citibank. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Ellen Driscoll—Imaginative sculptures contrived of wood with copper and lead sheathing. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Brandt, 568 Broadway.)

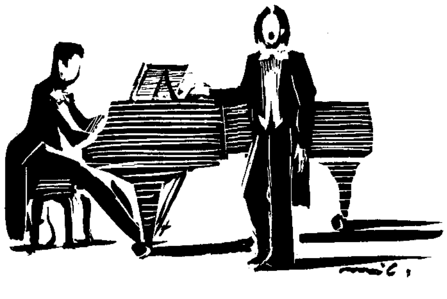
David Geiser—Abstract paintings that give the impression of great age, done in mixed mediums, a principal one being encaustic. Through Dec. 27. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St.)

Paul Georges—Paintings. Through Jan. 10. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

Mike Kelley—Acrylic paintings on paper. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Markus Lüpertz—Bronzes. Through Dec. 27. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Sylvia Plimack Mangold—Landscapes in mixed mediums. Through Jan. 3. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St. The gallery is showing, through Dec. 23, additional works, also by contemporary artists, whose sale will benefit The Kitchen, which spent its formative years at this address.)



Molly Mason / Harriet Mishkin—Freestanding abstract stainless-steel sculptures. / Abstract paintings and works on paper. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon.)

JoAnne McFarland—Recent mixed-medium paintings on Plexiglas, plus earlier abstract works on paper. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Phoenix, 568 Broadway.)

Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964)—A small show of watercolors, pencil drawings, and etchings by this lord of the bottles. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Haller, a new gallery at 415 West Broadway.)

Richard Rappaport—Paintings. Through Wednesday, Dec. 17. (Blue Mountain, 121 Wooster St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Joyce Robins—Small painted-ceramic sculptures that resemble thick pieces of rope twisted and knotted together. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Jonathan Silver—Sculptures from the past ten years. Through Dec. 24. (Gruenebaum, 415 West Broadway.)

Group Shows—At the **cooper**, 155 Wooster St.: Sculptures, mostly, by gallery regulars Robert Gober, Jackie Winsor, and others. Through Jan. 15. . . . **steinbaum**, 132 Greene St.: Paintings, drawings, sculptures, and prints by artists who happen to be over seventy—Herbert Ferber, Elizabeth Layton, Isabel Bishop, Esteban Vicente, and others. Through Jan. 3. . . . **toll**, 146 Greene St.: Two or more drawings each by fourteen artists, including Troy Brauntuch, Jan Hashey, and William T. Wiley. Through Jan. 10.

Sculpture—Forty artists contributed sculptured columns to this installation. Concrete, wood, electronic equipment, and paper are among the wide range of mediums used. Through Jan. 3. (14 Sculptors, 164 Mercer St. Open Sundays.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Joe Davis—Paintings and drawings depicting the city at night. Through Jan. 4. (Bernarducci, 17 E. 17th St. Opens at 1 Thursdays through Sundays.)

David Finn—Sculptures of casually posed figures with bodies constructed from refuse and heads covered with primitive masks. Through Dec. 24. (Ala, 32 W. 20th St.)

General Idea—From their Ziggurat series: one painting from 1968, several from 1986. Through Jan. 11. (International with Monument, 111 E. 7th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel—An engrossing installation involving an artificial lagoon, whirling fans, a spinning ball, and other eye-catching devices. Through Jan. 24. (Art Galaxy, 262 Mott St., just south of Houston St.)

Ed McGowin—Airbrushed paintings, mostly of figures, in molded-plastic and heavy cast-metal frames. Also, a large archway cast in plaster. Through Dec. 21. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Ken Sofer / Michael Abrams—Abstract paintings. / An installation incorporating relief sculptures. Through Jan 4. (M-13, at 413 E. 9th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Andy Warhol—Large-scale paintings from 1978. Through Dec. 24. (Gagosian, 521 W. 23rd St., near Eleventh Ave.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Berenice Abbott—Among other photographs, the artist has made new prints in a 30 x 40 format of works she did long ago—"The Flatiron Building," "Saints for Sale," and "The Hoboken Railroad Yards." Through Dec. 24. (Hamilton, 19 E. 71st St.)

Anton and Martin Bruehl—Advertising photographs from the thirties; the photographers, who were brothers, died in the past few years. Through Jan. 3. (Light, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Alfred Eisenstaedt / David Seymour (Chim) (1911-56)—A retrospective. / Work from the thirties, including prints of the Spanish Civil

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PARIS

BONWIT TELLER

War. Through Jan. 11. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Lee Friedlander / Len Jenshel—Framed individual prints from a book of photogravures of Japanese landscapes with flowering cherry trees. / Color landscapes of Texas photographed while the artist was working with David Byrne's production of "True Stories." Through Saturday, Dec. 13. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St.)

Frank Gohlke—Photographs of rural landscapes in France and in the American South, his first work in color. Through Saturday, Dec. 20. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Nan Goldin—Cibachrome prints of the artist's friends. Through Dec. 31. (Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Opens at noon.)

Annie Leibovitz—Portraits of pop stars Klaus Maria Brandauer, Cyndi Lauper, Emilio Estevez, Sandrine Bonnaire, and others. Through Dec. 27. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Kaspar Thomas Linder—Conceptual photographs obscured here and there with patches of paint. Through Dec. 24. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

Nicholas Nixon / Gustave Le Gray (1820-82)—Recent photographs of his family and of elderly people. / Photographs of seascapes and trees. Through Jan. 17. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Joseph Nechvatal—Color photographs. Through Jan. 4. (Greathouse, 337 E. 10th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Doug Prince and Leonard Sussman—Italian landscapes: prints made from multiple negatives by the former, showing flowers and plants superimposed on landscapes and architecture; photographs of Tuscany and Umbria by the latter. Through Jan. 10. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Group Shows—At the **ledel**, 168 Mercer St.: Photographs of New York by women photographers, among them Berenice Abbott, Esther Bubley, Helen Leavitt, Judith Turner, and Sylvia Plachy. Through Jan. 31. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays.) . . . **prakapas**, 19 E. 71st St.: Vintage prints by artists whose reputations were established by their work in other mediums—René Magritte and Henry Moore, for instance. Through Dec. 31. (Opens at noon.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Van Gogh in Saint-Rémy and Auvers," a show of paintings and drawings covering the artist's last fifteen months. Through March 22. . . . ¶ A large show of antiquities which illuminates life in the Holy Land from prehistoric times to the end of the Byzantine period, in the seventh century. The best preserved of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Habakkuk Commentary; a bronze of Hadrian; Tyrian and Jewish shekels; pottery and metal objects from cities of the Canaanite period; and numerous other artifacts. Through Jan. 4. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A survey of the paintings Morris Louis did after 1954. Through Jan. 4. . . . ¶ A show of scale models, photographs, and drawings by Swiss architect Mario Botta. Through Feb. 10. . . . ¶ An installation by Justen Ladda. Through Jan. 6. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works on paper by Jean Dubuffet. Through Jan. 13. . . . ¶ Prints by Odilon Redon. Through Feb. 3. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper by Oskar Kokoschka. Through Feb. 16. (A complementary show of works on paper is at the Marlborough Gallery, 40 W. 57th St.) (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A large retrospective of paintings and drawings by John Singer Sargent. Through Jan. 4. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works by John Storrs, early modernist sculptor, containing, in addition to sculptures, his paintings, drawings, and prints. Starts Friday, Dec. 12. . . . ¶ Mary Lucier's 1983 video "Ohio at Giverny" (18½ minutes) is showing continuously in the lobby gallery through Jan. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Machine Age in America 1918-1941," a display of paintings, sculptures, photographs, decorative objects, and appliances that reflect the fascination the machine held for American artists and designers during the period of the great industrial leaps between the World Wars. Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ An exhibit documenting the influence of Post-Impressionism on American and Canadian painters in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Thomas Hart Benton, Stuart Davis, and Emily Carr are among the artists represented. Through Jan. 19. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays 1 to 6.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A show of late-Ice Age art (which has been called "the childhood of art but not the art of children"), consisting of a hundred decorated stone, ivory, and bone objects, including the characteristic statuettes known as little Venuses. Also, a reconstruction of a hut made with mammoth bones. Through Jan. 18. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—The annual show sponsored by the purchase funds left by Childe Hassam and Eugene Speicher, this year containing paintings, drawings, and prints by sixty contemporary Americans. A number of the works will be bought and donated to museums. Through Sunday, Dec. 14. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—Handmade fine- and applied-art objects in a blazing show that befits the opening of a new home for the museum. Through March 22. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The museum has a full house of exhibitions to mark the end of its first ten years. The main show, called "Berlin 1900-1933: Architecture and Design," includes mass-produced objects (fans, kettles, porcelains), plus drawings and some familiar chairs, by Breuer, Mies van der Rohe, Behrens, and others. Through Jan. 25. . . . ¶ Two other shows are "Perspective" (trompe-l'oeil drawings, textiles, and objects from the fifteenth century to the twentieth, depicting three-dimensional space) and a selection of recent acquisitions. Through March 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A display that chronicles the European tradition of mounting rare Japanese and Chinese porcelains with gold, silver, and gilt bronze. Through March 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A display of works that have entered the collections recently—drawings by Mantegna, Mondrian, and others; illuminated manuscripts; books; literary and music manuscripts; and a copy of the first printing of the Declaration of Independence. Through Jan. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A show of installations that Hans Haacke has done during the past fifteen years, criticizing policies of the Reagan Administration, corporate sponsorship of the arts, and the influences of the advertising world on our culture. A painted portrait of Ronald Reagan, for instance, is juxtaposed with a large photomural of antinuclear demonstrations. Starts Friday, Dec. 12. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays, noon to 10; Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A display of antique toys—Teddy bears and dolls, including a Shirley Temple doll; trains, including a girl's freight-train set; cars, including a knockout six-foot replica of a Packard; games, including a Newport Yacht race game, circa 1891—from the Lawrence Scripps Wilkinson Collection. Through March 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—This magazine's first cover and more than a hundred other *New Yorker* covers and cartoons are on view in their original form in the Second Floor Gallery through Jan. 31. (Open Mondays through Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ From the Berg Collection: an exhibit of letters and literary works by English and American women writers from the eighteenth century to the present. (Open daily, except Sundays and Thursdays, 10 to 6.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671—Ann-Sargent Wooster (performance), Thursday and Friday, Dec. 11-12, at 8:30; Delia Doherty (performance), Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 18-20, at 8:30.

The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793—Performance: Victor Poison-Tete, Thursday, Dec. 11, at 9; Lydia Lunch and Emilio Cubeiro, Friday, Dec. 12, at 9; Dancenoise, Thursday and Friday, Dec. 18-19, at 8:30, and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8:30 and 11. . . . ¶ Films: Bette Gordon's "Greed: Pay to Play," and Ericka Beckman's "Cinderella," Saturday, Dec. 13, at 8:30.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Benefit performances: Johanna Boyce and the Calf Women, Ronnie Gilbert, Ethyl Eichelberger, and others, Friday, Dec. 19, at 9; John Kelley, Meredith Monk, and others, Saturday, Dec. 20, at 9.

Note—The Urban Bush Women, Liz Lerman, Alyson Pou, Johanna Boyce and the Calf Women, Robbie McCauley and Thought Music, and many others will participate in an evening of performance works in honor of the publication *Heresies.* (Taller Latinamericano, 19 W. 21st St. Friday, Dec. 12, at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 227-2108.) . . . ¶ "New York Post Wave," a work by Marilynn Danitz, in collaboration with Borah Bergman. (3 of a Kind, 514 W. 24th St. Thursday through Sunday, Dec. 11-14, Thursday and Friday, Dec. 18-19, and Sunday, Dec. 21, at 8:30; and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 9. For information about tickets, call 228-8705.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

"Christmas Rappings"—An oratorio by Al Carmines. (Synod Hall, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 110th St. 662-2133. Fridays through Sundays, Dec. 12-14 and 19-21, at 8.)

Ensemble for Early Music—Frederick Renz conducting a staged performance of Schütz' "Christmas Story," with the Grande Bande, the Court Dance Company, the Boyquire, and vocal soloists. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Saturday, Dec. 13, at 7:30.) . . . ¶ A program called "Christmas in Anglia." (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8.)

Vienna Choir Boys—Laurence Ewashko directing. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 3.)

New Amsterdam Singers—Clara Longstreth directing. (St. Ignatius Episcopal Church, West End Ave. at 87th St. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 4. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Canby Singers—Edward Tatnall Canby directing an a-cappella program. (St. John's Episcopal Church, 218 W. 11th St., at Waverly Pl. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 4. Admission by contribution.)

"A Jazz Nativity"—A work of music, mostly, by Anne Phillips, performed by Jon Hendricks, Helen Merrill, Mel Lewis, and others. A cast of actors includes Dave Brubeck, Tito Puente, and Honi Coles. The Most Reverend Edmund L. Browning will act as narrator. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. Monday, Dec. 15, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

I Cantori—Bart Folse directing. (House of the Redeemer, 7 E. 95th St. Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Waverly Consort—The seventh annual presentation of "The Christmas Story," a pageant based on medieval manuscripts and music. (Church of St. Vincent Ferrer, 869 Lexington Ave., at 66th St. Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 18-20, at 7 and 9:15. For information about tickets, call 666-1260.)

"The Christmas Revels"—A program, staged annually by John Langstaff, of music, dance, mime, and theatre, performed this year in French. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Thursday and Friday, Dec. 18-19, at 8; Saturday, Dec. 20, at 3 and 8; and Sunday, Dec. 21, at 2 and 7. At the Thursday evening and Saturday matinée performances there will be sign-language interpretation, in English translation, for deaf patrons.)

New York Choral Society—Robert DeCormier directing, with Peter, Paul & Mary. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Dec. 19, at 8, and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 2:30.)

Canticum Novum Singers—Harold Rosenbaum directing, with Walter Hilse, piano and organ. (Merkin Concert Hall. Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8.)

Handel's "Messiah"—**CANTERBURY CHORAL SOCIETY:** Charles Dodsley Walker directing an audience-participation performance of the Advent and Christmas portions of the oratorio, with soloists and an orchestra. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 4. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.) . . . **MUSICA SACRA:** Richard Westenburg directing, with Kaaren Erickson, soprano; Gretchen Greenfield, mezzo-soprano; Frank Lopardo, tenor; and William Stone, baritone. (Avery Fisher Hall. Monday, Dec. 15, and Friday, Dec. 19, at 7:30.) . . . **SING-IN AT AVERY FISHER HALL:** Directed (seriatim) by nineteen choral conductors. With Crail Conner, soprano; Jeffrey Dooley, countertenor; Mukund Marathe, tenor; Jon Ostendorf, bass-baritone; and Kenneth Bowen, organ. (Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 7:30.) . . . **ST. THOMAS CHOIR:** Gerre Hancock directing, with Judith Nelson, soprano; Drew Minter, countertenor; Jeffrey Thomas, tenor; Wilbur Pauley, bass; and the Concert Royal. (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. Thursday, Dec. 18, at 7:30. A benefit performance; for tickets, call 757-7013.) . . . **MASTERWORK CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA:** David Randolph directing, with Judith Nicosia, soprano; Suzanne Waleson, mezzo-soprano; Michael Best, tenor; and Jeffrey Horvath, bass. (Avery Fisher Hall. Saturday, Dec. 20, at 2:30.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday evening, Dec. 10: "Fidelio," with Hildegard Behrens, Robert Schunk, Siegmund Nimsgern, and Matthias Hölle; conducted by Christof Perick. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Dec. 11: "Roméo et Juliette," with Diana Soviero, Alfredo Kraus, Vernon Hartman, and Paul Plishka; Placido Domingo. . . . ¶ Friday evening, Dec. 12: "Die Fledermaus," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Judith Blegen, Tatiana Troyanos, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Dec. 13: "I Puritani," with Joan Sutherland, Rockwell Blake, Sherrill Milnes, and Samuel Ramey; Richard Bonynge. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Dec. 13: "Fidelio," with Hildegard Behrens, Robert Schunk, Siegmund Nimsgern, and Matthias Hölle; Christof Perick. . . . ¶ Monday evening, Dec. 15: "La Bohème," with Leona Mitchell, Barbara Daniels, Denés Gulyás, and Brian Schexnayder; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Dec. 16: "Die Fledermaus," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Judith Blegen, Tatiana Troyanos, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Wednesday

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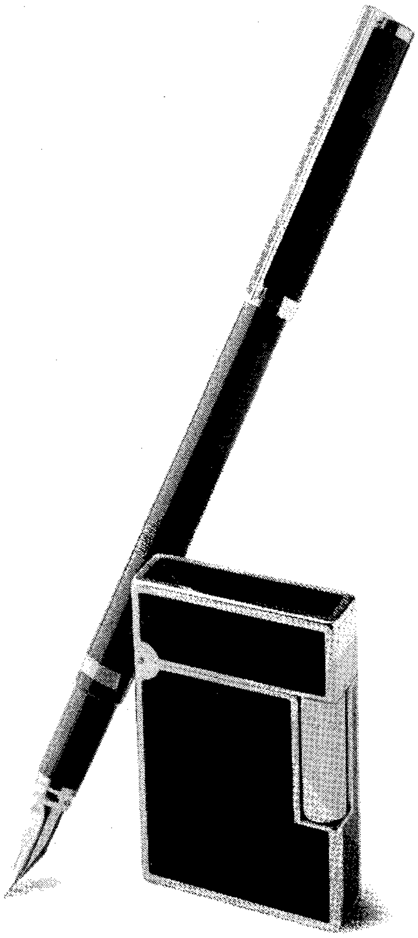

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Juilliard American Opera Center—Benefit performances of Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro," in an English translation by Ruth and Thomas Martin. Staged by Rhoda Levine, with the Juilliard Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Michael Charry. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Wednesday, Dec. 10, and Friday, Dec. 12, at 8, and Sunday, Dec. 14, at 3. For information about tickets, call 874-7515, Wednesday through Friday.)

Amato Opera Company—Presenting "Die Fledermaus," in English. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturday, Dec. 13, at 7:30, and Sunday, Dec. 14, at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—Zubin Mehta directing Verdi's Requiem Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 11-13, at 8, and Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 7:30 (all with Susan Dunn, soprano; Shirley Verrett, mezzo-soprano; Luciano Pavarotti, tenor; Matti Salminen, bass; and the New York Choral Artists; at the Tuesday performance, Leona Mitchell will replace Miss Dunn and a tenor to be announced will replace Mr. Pavarotti). . . . ¶ Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting a varied program on Thursday, Dec. 18, at 8; Friday, Dec. 19, at 2; and Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8 (all with Andrei Gavrilov, piano).

Boston Symphony—Seiji Ozawa conducting Mahler's Second Symphony, with Edith Wiens, soprano; Maureen Forrester, contralto; and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 17-18, at 8.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Michael Tilson Thomas conducting, with Marilyn Horne, mezzo-soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 8.)

Dessoff Choirs—Amy Kaiser directing. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. Saturday, Dec. 13, at 8. For information about tickets, call 935-2551.)

St. Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra—David Randolph directing the American première of Fanny Mendelssohn's "Oratorium nach Bildern der Bibel," plus Schubert's Mass No. 5, with Nan Nall, soprano; D'Anna Fortunato, mezzo-soprano; Michael Crouse, tenor; and William Metcalf, baritone. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8:30.)

RECITALS

Verdehr Trio—Presenting recent pieces written for, or commissioned by, the trio. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 8.)

American Brass Quintet—A program that includes three new works. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 8.)

Ivan Moravec—Piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Thursday, Dec. 11, at 8.)

Judith Pearce—Flute. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Dec. 11, at 8.)

Richard and John Conti-Guglia—Duo piano, performing Liszt's "Grosses Konzertstück on Mendelssohn's 'Songs Without Words' " and other works. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Dec. 11, at 8.)

Galimir String Quartet—A Mozart-Berg-Brahms program. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Friday, Dec. 12, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Beaux Arts Trio—Playing works by Haydn, Ives, and Brahms. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12-13, at 8.)

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Shura Cherkassky—Piano. (92nd Street Y. Saturday, Dec. 13, at 8.)

Musica Antiqua Köln—A program of baroque concertos. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, Dec. 13, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680.) . . . ¶ A program of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century German music. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 8.)

Composers String Quartet—A Mozart-Carter-Beethoven program. (Merkin Concert Hall, Saturday, Dec. 13, at 8.)

Spoleto Festival Chamber Music at BAM—A program of works by Gian Carlo Menotti, who will be present, performed by Marvis Martin, soprano; Carter Brey, cello; Nancy Allen, harp; the Ridge String Quartet; and others. The first of seven concerts. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, Dec. 13, at 8.)

New Sounds—Works composed and performed by Daniel Lentz and his ensemble, Steve Gorn, Ray Spiegel, and Elodie Lauten. The third in a series of five concerts. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 2.)

Lydia Artymiw—Piano. (92nd Street Y. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 3.)

Vladimir Horowitz—Piano. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 4.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—With David Starobin, classical guitarist, and Robert Routch, horn player. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 5, and Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 15-16, at 7:30.)

Daniel Barenboim—The last in a series of concerts presenting the Beethoven piano-sonata cycle. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, Dec. 14, at 7:30.) . . . ¶ An all-Chopin program. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 3.)

Jeffrey Swann—Piano. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 8.)

Juilliard String Quartet—A Sessions-Henri Dutilleux-Beethoven program. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 8. For free tickets, call 874-7515 beginning on Friday, Dec. 12.)

Chamber Music at the Y—The Ridge String Quartet and others. (92nd Street Y. Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 16-17, at 8.)

Washington Square Contemporary Music Series—Louis Karchin, Arlene Kies, Christopher Kies, and Paul Salerni, all piano; Lawrence Cherney, oboe/oboe d'amore; and a small company of dancers. (New York University Theatre, 35 W. 4th St. Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Donald Weilerstein and Vivian Hornik Weilerstein—Violin and piano, in a program honoring Ernest Bloch. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 8.)

New York Philomusica—Robert Johnson conducting. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 8.)

Anne Burgess

Mannes Contemporary Ensemble—A varied program. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Panayis Lyras—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Dec. 18, at 8.)

Stephanie Chase—Violin. (92nd Street Y. Thursday, Dec. 18, at 8.)

Sharon Robinson—Cello. (92nd Street Y. Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8.)

Ridge String Quartet—A Haydn-Berg-Beethoven program. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

Music from Japan—Koichiro Harada, violin, and others, in a program of new works. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742. Saturday, Dec. 20, at 8.)

MISCELLANY

Benefit Concert—Isaac Stern, Frank Sinatra, Marilyn Horne, Yo-Yo Ma, Peter Duchin and his orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic with conductor Zubin Mehta will be among the participants at a reopening celebration for Carnegie Hall. (Monday, Dec. 15, at 8. For information about tickets, call 903-9600.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **Byrne Meadowlands Arena:** Nets vs. Philadelphia 76ers, Friday, Dec. 12, at 7:30. . . . **Madison Square Garden:** Knicks vs. Atlanta Hawks, Saturday, Dec. 13; Boston Celtics, Tuesday, Dec. 16; Nets, Thursday, Dec. 18; and Indiana Pacers, Saturday, Dec. 20. (Games begin at 7:30.)

Football—At Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands—Jets vs. Pittsburgh Steelers, Saturday, Dec. 13, at 12:30. . . . ¶ Giants vs. St. Louis Cardinals, Sunday, Dec. 14, at 1, and Green Bay Packers, Saturday, Dec. 20, at 12:30.

Hockey—At **Madison Square Garden:** Rangers vs. Los Angeles Kings, Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 7:35; Minnesota North Stars, Monday, Dec. 15, at 7:35; and Washington Capitals, Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 7:35. . . . **Byrne Meadowlands Arena:** Devils vs. Islanders, Thursday, Dec. 11; Montreal Canadiens, Sunday, Dec. 14; Toronto Maple Leafs, Wednesday, Dec. 17; and Washington Capitals, Friday, Dec. 19. (Games begin at 7:35.) . . . **Nassau Coliseum:** Islanders vs. Devils, Saturday, Dec. 13, at 7:05; Minnesota North Stars, Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 8:05; and Rangers, Saturday, Dec. 20, at 7:05.

Racing—At **Aqueduct:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. . . . **Meadowlands:** Nightly at 8; through Saturday, Dec. 13.

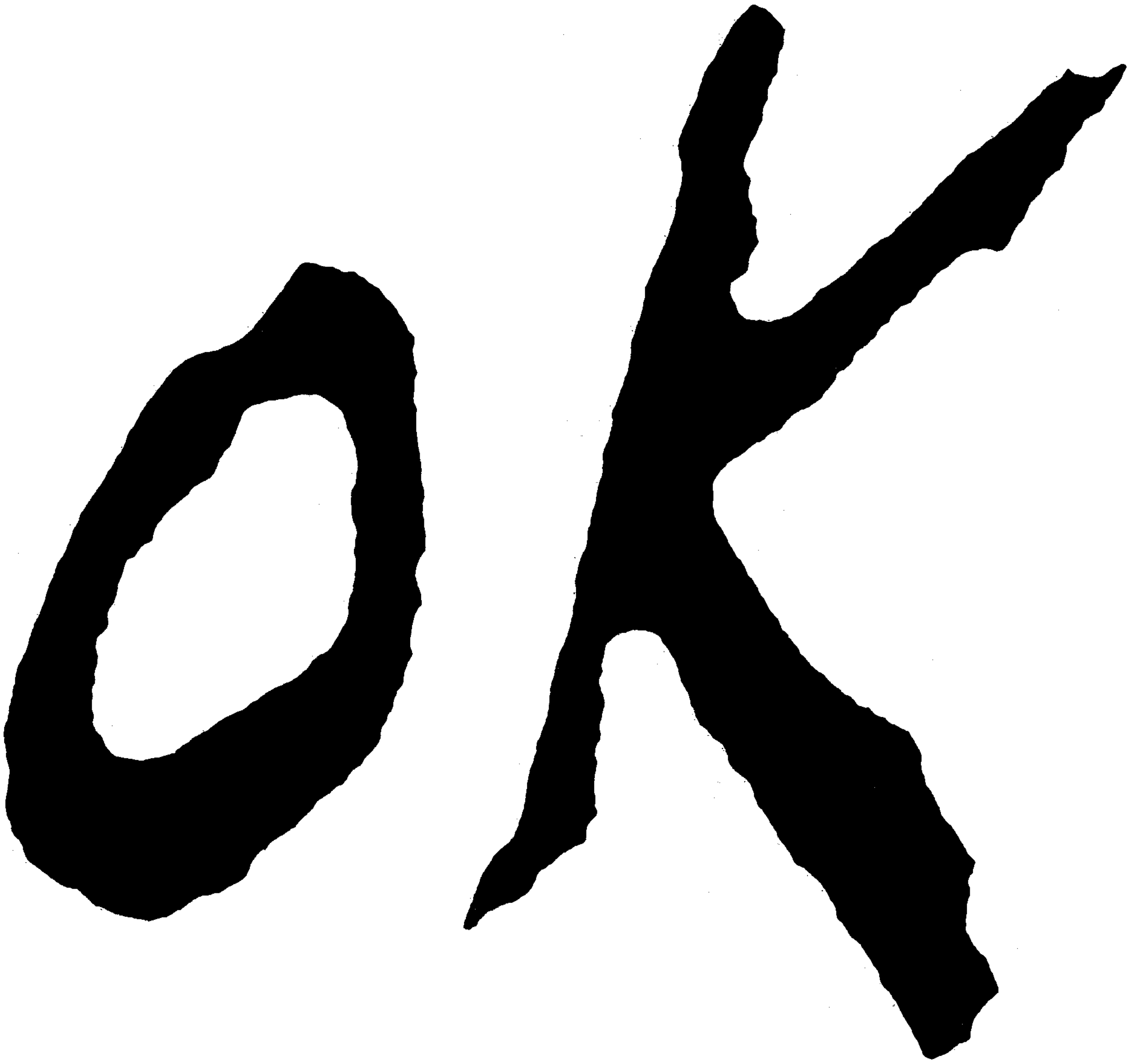
Trotting—At Yonkers Raceway: Nightly at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; through Wednesday, Jan. 7.

ET ALIA

Poetry, Prose, and Drama Readings—Tama Janowitz and Sonia Pilcer reading from their own fiction. (West Side Y, 5 W. 63rd St. 787-6557. Friday, Dec. 12, at 8.) . . . ¶ Wallace Shawn and Christopher Durang reading from their own plays. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, Dec. 15, at 8.) . . . ¶ Richard Elman reading from his own poetry. (Educational Alliance West, 51 E. 10th St. 420-1150. Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 8.)

Auctions—Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sunday, Dec. 14, from 1 to 5.)—Friday, Dec. 12, at 10:15 and 2: Russian works of art and silver. . . . ¶ Saturday, Dec. 13, at 2: English furniture. . . . ¶ Saturday, Dec. 13, at 2: Oriental carpets. . . . ¶ Monday, Dec. 15, at 10:15 and 2: Books and manuscripts. Exhibition starts Thursday, Dec. 11. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 2: French and other Continental furniture. Exhibition starts Saturday, Dec. 13. . . . ¶ Thursday, Dec. 18, at 10:15 and 2: Judaica. Exhibition starts Friday, Dec. 12.

Oskar Kokoschka
1886-1980



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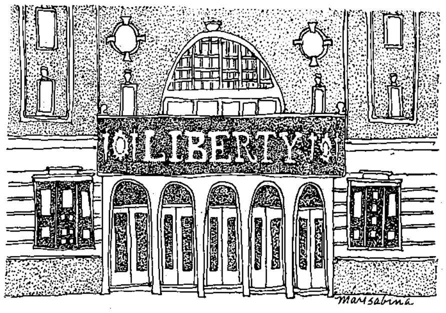
THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 26.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Dec. 11: "Sudden Fear" (1952; directed by David Miller), with Joan Crawford, Jack Palance, and Gloria Grahame; and "Plenty" (1985; Fred Schepisi), with Meryl Streep.
From Dec. 12: "Typhoon Club" (Shinji Somai; in Japanese).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film. From Dec. 19: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.
Theatre 2: "Something Wild" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 11: "Modern Girls" (Jerry Kramer). Dec. 12-18: "Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Penny Marshall), with Whoopi Goldberg. From Dec. 19: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through Dec. 11: "52 Pick-Up" (John Frankenheimer), with Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret.
Dec. 12-18: "Mona Lisa" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Little Shop of Horrors" (Frank Oz), with Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vincent Gardenia.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"The Color of Money" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan. From Dec. 12: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 11: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home." From Dec. 12: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through Dec. 11: "Something Wild" (†).
From Dec. 12: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Song of the South" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Dec. 18: "Round Midnight" (†).
From Dec. 19: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 11: "Heartbreak Ridge" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood. From Dec. 12: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 2: "Heartbreak Ridge."

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "Something Wild" (†). From Dec. 19: "King Kong Lives" (John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton.
Theatre 2: "The Color of Money" (†). No performances Tuesday, Dec. 16.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Dec. 18: "Blue Velvet" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Round Midnight" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons. From Dec. 19: "Miss Mary" (Maria Luisa Bemberg), with Julie Christie.
Theatre 2: "Betty Blue" (Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French), with Jean-Hugues Anglade and Béatrice Dalle.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "52 Pick-Up" (John Frankenheimer), with Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret. From Dec. 12: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through Dec. 18: "True Stories" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Little Shop of Horrors" (Frank Oz), with Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vincent Gardenia.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 11: "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong. From Dec. 12: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film. From Dec. 12: To be announced.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Rouge Baiser" (Vera Belmont; in French), *with Charlotte Valandrey.*

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

U.A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Dec. 11: "Rebel" (Michael Jenkins), with Matt Dillon.
From Dec. 12: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin, *Lexington at 86th.* (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "Heartbreak Ridge" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Firewalker" (J. Lee Thompson), with Chuck Norris and Lou Gossett. From Dec. 19: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

Loews Orpheum 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home." From Dec. 12: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 16: "Half Life" (1985; directed by Dennis O'Rourke), a documentary. From Dec. 17: "The Future of Emily" (1984; Helma Sanders-Brahms; in French), with Brigitte Fossey and Hildegard Knef.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "Porky Pig in Hollywood," a program of sixteen black-and-white Warner Brothers cartoons, directed by Tex Avery, Friz Freleng, Bob Clampett, Frank Tashlin, and Chuck Jones. From Dec. 12: "Mona Lisa" (†).

Bleecker St. Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 11: "Mother Teresa" (Ann and Jeanette Petrie), a documentary. From Dec. 12: "Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (†). From Dec. 12: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (†); and "Mother Teresa."

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Blue Velvet" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Color of Money" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the *late afternoon.)*
"True Stories" (†).

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 11: "Solarbabies" (Alan Johnson), with Richard Jordan. From Dec. 12: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Round Midnight" (†). From Dec. 19: "The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Down by Law" (†).
Theatre 2: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Room with a View" (†).
Theatre 4: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Heartbreak Ridge" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: (Matinées only) "Song of the South" (†); and (evenings only) "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. *Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong.* From Dec. 19: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 18: "The Name of the Rose" (Jean-Jacques Annaud), with Sean Connery and F. Murray Abraham. From Dec. 19: "King Kong Lives" (John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through Dec. 18: "Song of the South" (†).
From Dec. 19: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Nutcracker, The Motion Picture" (Carroll Ballard), with the Pacific Northwest Ballet.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Sid and Nancy" (Alex Cox), with Gary Oldman and Chloe Webb.

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
"Place of Weeping" (Darrell Roodt).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Decline of the American Empire" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Marlene" (Maximilian Schell), a documentary.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Sacrifice" (Andrei Tarkovsky; in Swedish), with Erland Josephson.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 16: "Down by Law" (†). From Dec. 17: "Thérèse" (Alain Cavalier; in French), with Catherine Mouchet.
Theatre 3: "Men . . ." (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Tangos: The Exile of Gardel" (Fernando E. Solanas; in French and Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Ménage" (Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Michel Blanc, and Miou-Miou.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "The Color of Money" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Room with a View" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 11: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan. From Dec. 12: "Crimes of the Heart" (†).
Theatre 2: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage

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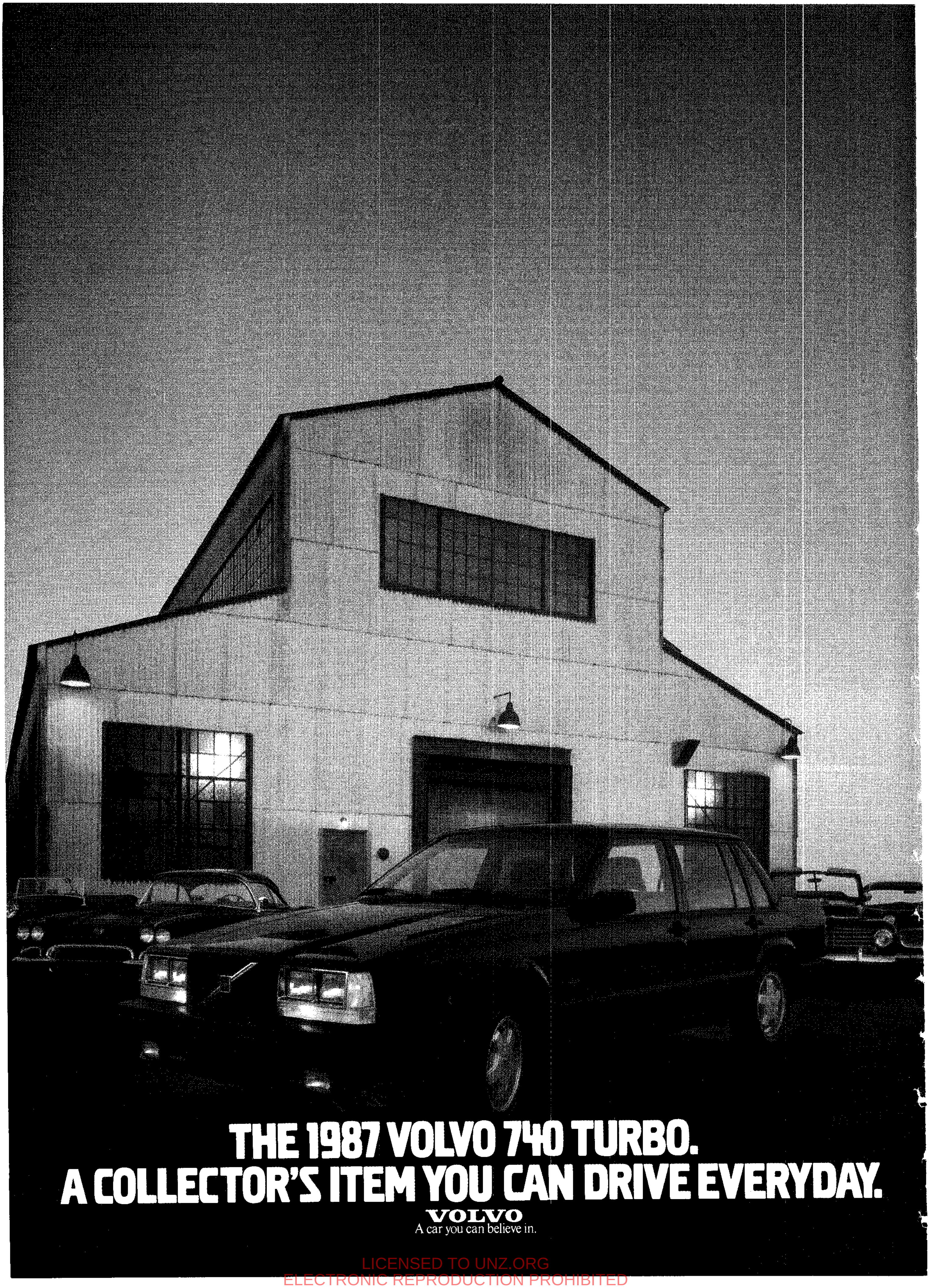
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Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.

Theatre 3: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).

Theatre 4: "Something Wild" (†).

Theatre 5: Through Dec. 11: "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong. From Dec. 12: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

Theatre 6: Through Dec. 11: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home." From Dec. 12: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "True Stories" (†).

Theatre 2: "Blue Velvet" (†).

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film.

Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "Rebel" (Michael Jenkins), with Matt Dillon. From Dec. 12: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

Theatre 3: Through Dec. 18: (Matinées only) "Song of the South" (†); and (evenings only) "Stand By Me" (†). From Dec. 19: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.

Theatre 4: Through Dec. 11: "Tough Guys" (Jeff Kanew), with Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas. Dec. 12-18: "Class of Nuke 'em High" (Richard W. Haines and Samuel Weil). From Dec. 19: "Allan Quatermain and the Lost City of Gold" (Gary Nelson), with Richard Chamberlain and Sharon Stone.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "Modern Girls" (directed by Jerry Kramer). Dec. 12-18: "The Patriot." From Dec. 19: "King Kong Lives" (John Guillermin), with Brian Kerwin and Linda Hamilton.

Theatre 3: "Something Wild" (†).

Theatre 4: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).

Theatre 5: Through Dec. 18: "Streets of Gold" (Joe Roth), with Klaus Maria Brandauer. From Dec. 19: "Little Shop of Horrors" (Frank Oz), with Rick Moranis, Ellen Greene, and Vincent Gardenia.

Theatre 6: "Blue Velvet" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)

"The Color of Money" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

Theatre 3: "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong.

Theatre 4: "Stand By Me" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"An American Tail" (Don Bluth), an animated film.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)

Theatre 1: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" (Leonard Nimoy), with William Shatner and Nimoy.

Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home." From Dec. 12: "The Golden Child" (Michael Ritchie), with Eddie Murphy.

New Embassy 49th Street, 49th St. near Seventh Ave. (757-7003)

Through Dec. 18: "Song of the South" (†). No performances Tuesday, Dec. 16.

From Dec. 19: "Lady and the Tramp" (1955), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.

R.K.O. National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through Dec. 18: "Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Penny Marshall), with Whoopi Goldberg. From Dec. 19: "The Mosquito Coast" (Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford.

Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "The Wraith" (Mike Marvin). From Dec. 19: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.

R.K.O. Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (315-8425)

Theatre 1: "Heartbreak Ridge" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood.

Theatre 2: Through Dec. 18: "Firewalker" (J. Lee Thompson), with Chuck Norris and Lou Gossett. From Dec. 19: "No Mercy" (Richard Pearce), with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger.

U.A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)

Theatre 1: Through Dec. 11: "Rebel" (Michael Jenkins), with Matt Dillon. From Dec. 12: "Class of Nuke 'em High" (Richard W. Haines and Samuel Weil).

Theatre 2: Through Dec. 11: "Weekend Warriors" (Bert Convy), with Chris Lemmon and Lloyd Bridges. From Dec. 12: "Three Amigos" (John Landis), with Steve Martin, Chevy Chase, and Martin Short.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Dec. 11: "The Brother from Another Planet" (1984; directed by John Sayles), with Joe Morton, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Sayles; and "Last Night at the Alamo" (1984; Eagle Pennell).

Dec. 12-13: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (1983; Peter Weir), with Mel Gibson, Sigourney Weaver, and Linda Hunt; and "Witness" (1985; Peter Weir), with Harrison Ford, Kelly McGillis, Lukas Haas, and Josef Sommer.

Dec. 14-16: "The 400 Blows" (1959; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud; and "Jules and Jim" (1962; François Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre.

Dec. 17-18: "Choose Me" (1984; Alan Rudolph), with Keith Carradine, Geneviève Bujold, and Lesley Ann Warren; and "Trouble in Mind" (1986; Alan Rudolph), with Kris Kristofferson, Geneviève Bujold, Lori Singer, Keith Carradine, and Divine.

Dec. 19-20: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (1985; Hector Babenco), with William Hurt and Raul Julia; and "Zoot Suit" (1982; Luis Valdez), with Edward James Olmos and Charles Aidman.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Dec. 10: "The Fallen Idol" (1948; Carol Reed), with Bobby Henrey, Ralph Richardson, and Michèle Morgan; and "Hobson's Choice" (1953; David Lean), with Charles Laughton, John Mills, and Brenda de Banzie.

Dec. 11: "The Private Life of Don Juan" (1934; Alexander Korda), with Douglas Fairbanks and Merle Oberon; and "Forever Yours" (1937; Stanley Irving and Zoltán Korda), with Beniamino Gigli and Joan Gardner.

Dec. 12-13: "Richard III" (1956; Laurence Olivier), with Olivier, Claire Bloom, Ralph Richardson, John Gielgud, and Cedric Hardwicke.

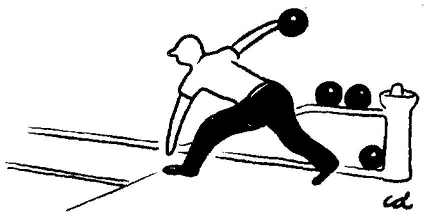
Dec. 14-15: "Christmas in Connecticut" (1945; Peter Godfrey), with Dennis Morgan, Barbara Stanwyck, and Sydney Greenstreet; and "Meet John Doe" (1941; Frank Capra), with Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck, and Edward Arnold.

Dec. 16-17: "Life Begins at 8:30" (1942; Irving Pichel), with Ida Lupino, Monty Woolley, and Cornel Wilde; and "The Man Who Came to Dinner" (†).

Dec. 18-20: "An Affair to Remember" (1957; Leo McCarey), with Cary Grant, Deborah Kerr, and Richard Denning; and "The Shop Around the Corner" (†).

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Dec. 10: "Broken Blossoms" (1919; D. W. Griffith; a silent film), with Lillian Gish and Richard Barthelmess; and "Abraham Lincoln" (1930; D. W. Griffith), with Walter Huston, Una Merkel, and Kay Hammond.



Dec. 11: "Ride in the Whirlwind" (1965; Monte Hellman), with Jack Nicholson, Cameron Mitchell, and Millie Perkins; and "The Shooting" (1965; Monte Hellman), with Warren Oates, Will Hutchins, Millie Perkins, and Jack Nicholson.

Dec. 12-13: "Blade Runner" (1982; Ridley Scott), with Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, Brion James, Joanna Cassidy, and Daryl Hannah; and "A Clockwork Orange" (1971; Stanley Kubrick), with Malcolm McDowell, Patrick Magee, and Adrienne Corri.

Dec. 14: "M" (1932; Fritz Lang; in German), with Peter Lorre; and "The Threepenny Opera" (1931; G. W. Pabst; in German), with Lotte Lenya.

Dec. 15: "The Girl Hunters" (1963; Roy Rowland), with Mickey Spillane, Shirley Eaton, and Lloyd Nolan; "He Walked by Night" (1949; Alfred Werker), with Richard Basehart and Scott Brady; and "Trapped" (1949; Richard Fleischer), with Lloyd Bridges.

Dec. 16: "Diabolique" (1955; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse; and "The Wages of Fear" (1953; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Yves Montand.

Dec. 17: "Macario" (1960; Roberto Gavaldon; a Mexican film, in Spanish); "Simon of the Desert" (†); and "Los Olvidados" (†).

Dec. 18: "It's a Wonderful Life" (†) and "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" (†).

Dec. 19-20: "Day for Night" (1973; François Truffaut; in French), with Jacqueline Bisset, Jean-Pierre Aumont, Jean-Pierre Léaud, and Valentina Cortese; and "Shoot the Piano Player" (1960; François Truffaut; in French), with Charles Aznavour.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Through Dec. 11: A program of homosexual films.

Dec. 12-13: "Blood Simple" (1985; Joel Coen), with John Getz, Dan Hedaya, Frances McDormand, and M. Emmet Walsh; and "F/X" (1986; Robert Mandel), with Bryan Brown and Brian Dennehy.

Dec. 14: "The Earrings of Madame de . . ." (†); and "Liebelei" (1932; Max Ophuls; in German).

Dec. 15: "Variety" (†); and "Potemkin" (1925; Sergei Eisenstein; a Russian silent film).

Dec. 16: "Detour" (1945; Edgar G. Ulmer), with Ann Savage and Tom Neal; "Strange Illusion" (1945; Edgar G. Ulmer), with Jimmy Lydon and Sally Eilers; and "The Strange Woman" (1947; Edgar G. Ulmer), with Hedy Lamarr, George Sanders, and Louis Hayward.

Dec. 17: "Mondo Trasho" (1970; John Waters) and "Multiple Maniacs" (1977; John Waters).

Dec. 18: "Desperate Living" (1977; John Waters), with Edith Massey, Mink Stole, and Mary Vivian Pearce; and "Polyester" (1981; John Waters), with Divine and Tab Hunter.

Dec. 19: "Divine Waters" (1983; Vito Zagarrio), a documentary; and "Pink Flamingos" (1974; John Waters), with Divine.

Dec. 20: "Divine Waters;" and "Female Trouble" (1975; John Waters), with Divine.

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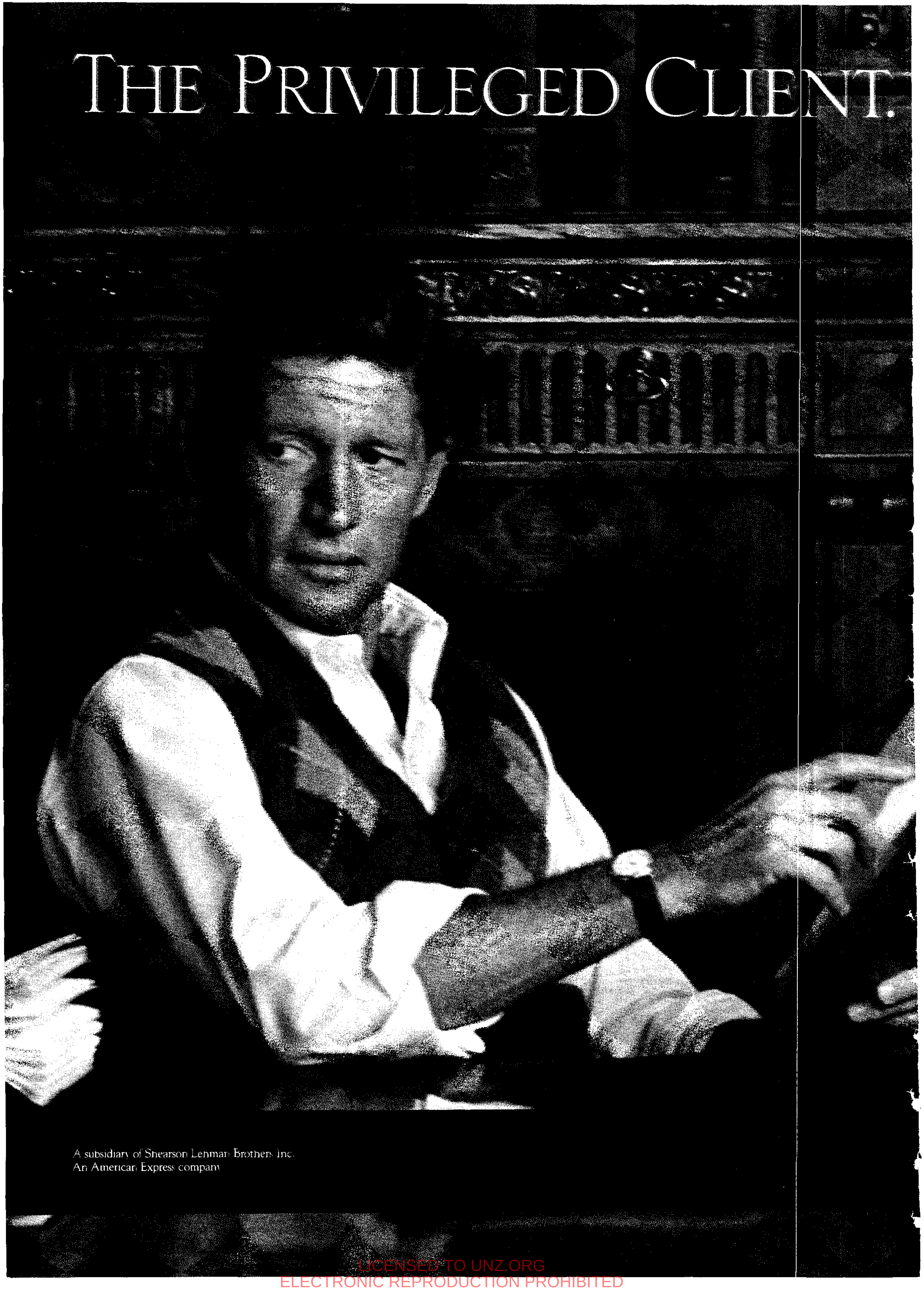
Dec. 10: "Morocco" (1930; Josef von Sternberg), with Marlene Dietrich and Gary Cooper; and "Dishonored" (1931; Josef von Sternberg), with Marlene Dietrich and Victor McLaglen.

Dec. 11: "Holiday Inn" (1942; Mark Sandrich), with Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire; and "Second Chorus" (1940; H. C. Potter), with Fred Astaire, Paulette Goddard, and Burgess Meredith.

Dec. 12-14: "It's a Wonderful Life" (†); and "Christmas in Connecticut" (1945; Peter Godfrey), with Dennis Morgan, Barbara Stanwyck, and Sydney Greenstreet.

Dec. 15: "La Marseillaise" (1938; Jean Renoir; in French), with Pierre Renoir and Louis Jouvet; and "A Day in the Country" (†).

Dec. 16: "Heaven Can Wait" (1943; Ernst Lubitsch), with Gene Tierney and Don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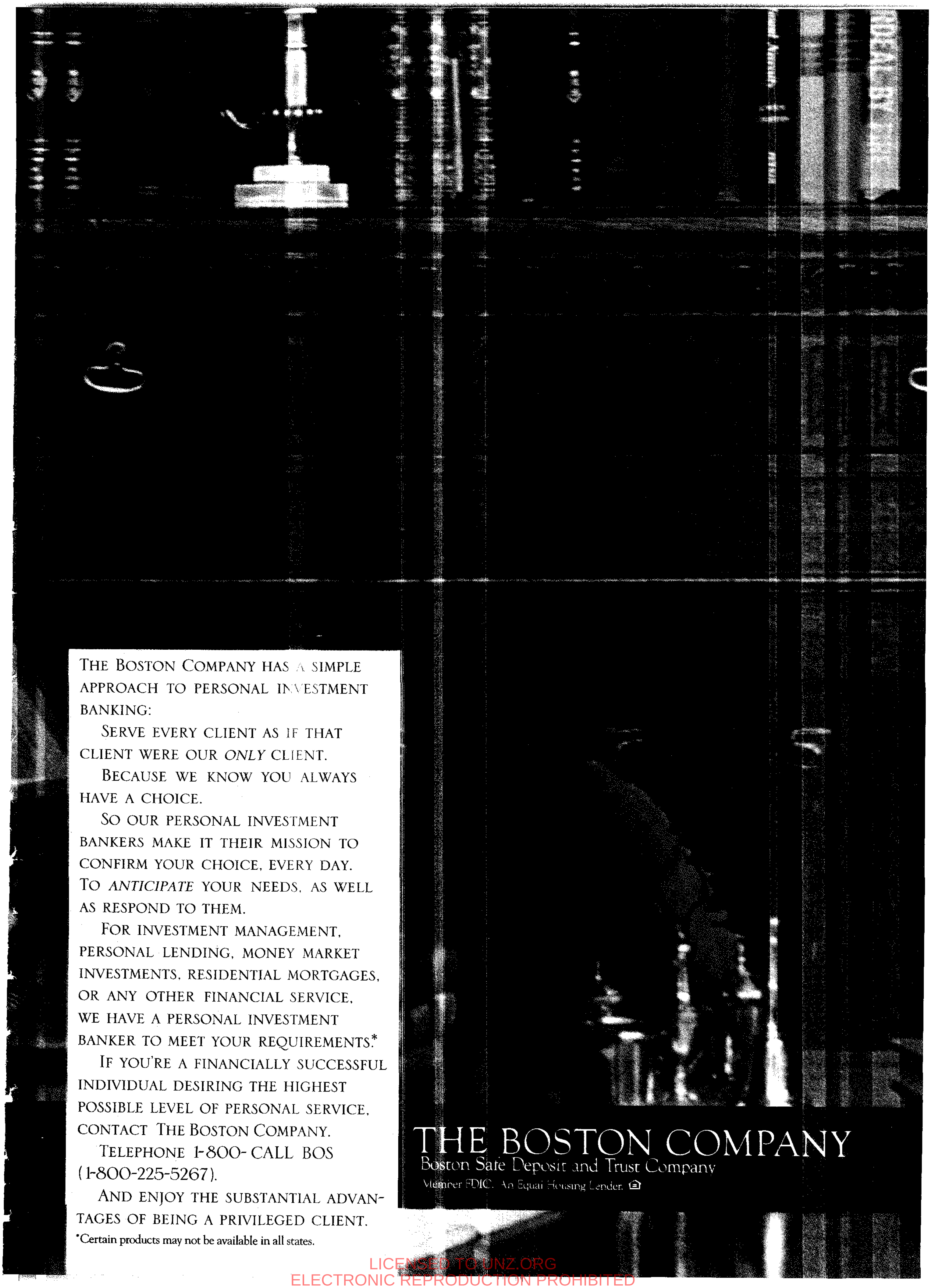

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Ameche; and "Leave Her to Heaven" (1945; John M. Stahl), with Gene Tierney, Cornel Wilde, Jeanne Crain, and Vincent Price.

Dec. 17: "Weekend in Havana" (†); and "Greenwich Village" (1944; Walter Lang), with Carmen Miranda, Don Ameche, and William Bendix.

Dec. 18: "Red River" (1948; Howard Hawks), with Montgomery Clift, John Wayne, Walter Brennan, and Joanne Dru; and "Shane" (†).

Dec. 19-20: "The Great Gatsby" (1949; Elliott Nugent), with Alan Ladd, Betty Field, Macdonald Carey, and Barry Sullivan; and "The Blue Dahlia" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

THEATRE 1: Dec. 11 at 2:30 and 6: "You Only Live Once" (1937; directed by Fritz Lang), with Sylvia Sidney and Henry Fonda. . . . ¶ Dec. 12 at 2:30: "The Lady Vanishes" (1938; Alfred Hitchcock), with Margaret Lockwood, Michael Redgrave, Paul Lukas, and Dame May Whitty. . . . ¶ Dec. 12 at 6: "Odd Man Out" (1947; Carol Reed), with James Mason, Kathleen Ryan, Robert Beatty, Cyril Cusack, and Fay Compton. . . . ¶ Dec. 13 at 2: "The Upturned Glass" (1947; Lawrence Huntington), with James Mason and Rosamund John. . . . ¶ Dec. 13 at 5: "Corridor of Mirrors" (1948; Terence Young), with Eric Portman and Edana Romney. . . . ¶ Dec. 15 at 2:30: "The Arsenal Stadium Mystery" (1939; Thorold Dickinson), with Leslie Banks and Greta Gynt. . . . ¶ Dec. 15 at 6: "They Drive by Night" (1938; Arthur Woods), with Emlyn Williams and Ernest Thesiger. . . . ¶ Dec. 16 at 2:30: "Poison Pen" (1939; Paul Stein), with Flora Robson, Robert Newton, and Ann Todd. . . . ¶ Dec. 16 at 6: "The Nursemaid Who Disappeared" (1939; Arthur Woods), with Arthur Margetson and Peter Coke. . . . ¶ Dec. 18 at 2:30 and 6: "Night Mail" (1936; Harry Watt and Basil Wright), "The River" (1937; Pare Lorentz), and "The Spanish Earth" (1937; Joris Ivens). . . . ¶ Dec. 19 at 2:30: "Dangerous Moonlight" ("Suicide Squadron;" 1941; Brian Desmond Hurst), with Anton Walbrook, Sally Gray, and Derrick de Marney. . . . ¶ Dec. 19 at 6: "On the Night of the Fire" ("The Fugitive;" 1939; Brian Desmond Hurst), with Ralph Richardson and Diana Wynyard. . . . ¶ Dec. 20 at 2: "Noose" ("The Silk Noose;" 1948; Edmond T. Greville), with Carole Landis, Derek Farr, Joseph Calleia, and Stanley Holloway. . . . ¶ Dec. 20 at 5: "The Small Back Room" (1949; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with David Farrar, Kathleen Byron, Jack Hawkins, and Leslie Banks.

THEATRE 2: Dec. 11 at 3 and 6:30: "Beyond Sorrow, Beyond Pain" (1983; Agneta Elers-Jarleman), a documentary. . . . ¶ Dec. 12 at 3: "Le Brasier Ardent" (1923; Alexandre Volkoff and Ivan Mosjoukine; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Mosjoukine and Nathalie Lissenko. . . . ¶ Dec. 12 at 6:30: "L'Hirondelle et la Mésange" (1920; André Antoine; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Pierre Alcover. . . . ¶ Dec. 13 at 2:30: "Les Films de Lumière, 1895-98," compiled by Vincent Pinel of the Cinémathèque Française. . . . ¶ Dec. 13 at 5:30: "Le Brasier Ardent." . . . ¶ Dec. 14 at 2:30: A program of silent French films from the Cinémathèque Française, with French intertitles. . . . ¶ Dec. 14 at 5:30: "L'Hirondelle et la Mésange." . . . ¶ Dec. 15 at 3: "Les Films de Lumière, 1895-98." . . . ¶ Dec. 15 at 6:30: "Living in the World, Parts I-IV" (1984-85; Joe Gibbons). Mr. Gibbons will be present. . . . ¶ Dec. 16 at 3: A program of silent French films from the Cinémathèque Française, with French intertitles. . . . ¶ Dec. 16 at 6:30: "La Vie de Notre Seigneur Jesus-Christ" (1913; Maurice-André Maître; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Jacques Normand and Gina Moreau. . . . ¶ Dec. 18 at 3 and 6:30: "The Rise and Fall of the Borscht Belt" (1986; Peter Davis), a documentary. . . . ¶ Dec. 19 at 3: "La Vie de Notre Seigneur Jesus-Christ." . . . ¶ Dec. 19 at 6:30 and Dec. 20 at 2:30: "Les Misérables" (1913; Albert Capellani; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Henri Krauss and Mistinguett. . . . ¶ Dec. 20 at 5:30: "Le Reflet de Claude Mercoeur" (1923; Julien Duvivier; a French silent film, with French intertitles), with Gaston Jacquet and Maud Richard.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—"Silver Lake with Dolmen Music," an installation by Meredith Monk, including "Dolmen Music" (1980). Continuous showings Tuesdays, 1 to 8; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; and Sundays, noon to 6. Closed Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Blue Dahlia (1946)—The director, George Marshall, doesn't provide a tense atmosphere or a hardboiled pace, and though the screenplay is by Raymond Chandler, the picture just drags along. The plot involves Alan Ladd as a Navy flier whose adulterous wife (Doris Dowling) is murdered; a night-club proprietor (Howard Da Silva) whose own estranged wife (Veronica Lake) is attracted to the flier; and the flier's psychoneurotic buddy (William Bendix), who can never remember just what he's been up to. There are also voyeurs, blackmailers, baffled cops, and mugs in the pay of the night-club proprietor. Ladd takes many a mauling before he gathers the heroine (Lake) in his arms. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 19-20.)

Blue Velvet—Written and directed by David Lynch, this is possibly the only coming-of-age movie in which sex has the danger and the heightened excitement of a horror picture. The film is consciously purplish and consciously funny, and the two work together in an original, down-home way. The setting is an archetypal small, sleepy city in an indefinite mythic present that feels like the past, and Kyle MacLachlan is Jeffrey, the clean-cut young man who's scared of his dirty thoughts (but wants to have them anyway). He commutes between the blue lady of the night (Isabella Rossellini, who's a dream of a freak) and the sunshine girl he loves (Laura Dern). The movie has so much aural-visual humor and poetry that it's sustained despite the wobbly plot and other weaknesses. With Dennis Hopper, who gives the movie a jolt of horrific energy, and Dean Stockwell, who is a smiling wonder as Ben the sandman. Also with Hope Lange, Priscilla Pointer, Brad Dourif, and Jack Nance. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/22/86.) (Waverly, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; through Dec. 18.)

The Color of Money—This Martin Scorsese film takes up Paul Newman as Fast Eddie Felson twenty-five years after the close of the 1961 Robert Rossen film "The Hustler," in which Eddie, the new poolroom champion, quit the game. Now he's a silver-haired Chicago liquor salesman, a likable cynical sharpie who himself stakes young hustlers (for sixty per cent of their winnings). When he sees the raw, cocky upstart Vincent (Tom Cruise), he makes a deal to train the kid. Newman brings off some beautiful smiling deviltry. The kick he gets out of acting is inseparable from Eddie's con artistry, and, with the help of pungent low-life dialogue by Richard Price, who wrote the script, he carries the action along. But about midway the joy goes out of Newman's performance, which (despite the efforts of a lot of good actors) is the only life in the movie. With Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Helen Shaver, Forest Whitaker, John Turturro, and Bill Cobbs. (11/3/86) (Bay Cinema, Waverly, Embassy 72nd St., and Embassy I. . . . ¶ Coronet. No performances Tuesday, Dec. 16.)

Crimes of the Heart—With Diane Keaton, Jessica Lange, and Sissy Spacek; directed by Bruce Beresford. (Reviewed in this issue.) (34th St. East, Manhattan, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, and Loews 84th Street Six-plex; starting Dec. 12.)

A Day in the Country (1937)—Jean Renoir's short (thirty-seven-minute) film from a de Maupassant story is one of the two or three greatest short-story films ever made—a lyric tragedy that accomplishes a transformation from light nostalgic comedy to despair. In the late eighteen-hundreds a merchant (Gabriello) takes his family for an outing on the banks of the Marne; there, his wife (Jeanne Marken) and his innocent young daughter (Sylvia Bataille) are seduced—the one delightedly, the other tremblingly, like a captured bird. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 15.)

The Decline of the American Empire—With Dominique Michel, directed by Denys Arcand. A Canadian film, in French. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Paris.)

Down by Law—Jim Jarmusch's low-key minimalist comedy about American anomie, shot in black-and-white. The setting is New Orleans, where two deadbeats—Jack, an ineffectual pimp (John Lurie), and Zack, an itinerant disk jockey (Tom Waits)—become the victims of frameups and are put in the same prison cell, where they vegetate in hostile silence. Everything changes when a little, life-loving Italian, Roberto (Roberto Benigni), is put in with them; the three become pals, grinning and talking together. And, eventually, Roberto devises an escape plan. Jarmusch's passive style has its wit, but the style is deadening here until he brings in Roberto—a character out of folk humor. With Ellen Barkin, Billie Neal, Nicoletta Braschi, Rockets Redglare, and Vernel Bagneris. (10/20/86) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Lincoln Plaza; through Dec. 16.)

The Earrings of Madame de . . . (1953)—Perfection. This tragedy of love, which begins in narcissistic flirtation and passes from romance to passion to desperation, is set, ironically, in aristocratic circles that seem too superficial to take love tragically. The performances by Danielle Darrieux as Madame de, by Vittorio De Sica as her lover the Baron, and by Charles Boyer as her husband, Monsieur de, a general, are quite likely the finest each has given. Max Ophuls' lush, decorative style, his re-creation of a vanished elegance, and his darting, swirling camera are used to evoke the protection that style and manners and wealth provide, and to demonstrate that passion destroys it all. Even the fashionable and secure become rash, make fools of themselves. Madame de places love before honor (what woman does not?), and neither her husband nor her lover can forgive her. With Jean Debucourt and Lia de Léa. In French. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 14.)

It's a Wonderful Life (1946)—Frank Capra's most relentless lump-in-the-throat movie. The hero (James Stewart) is a self-sacrificial good man who runs a small-town building-and-loan association that is threatened by the local ogre, Lionel Barrymore. Thinking he has no resources left, the hero is on the brink of suicide when he is given a vision of what life would be like for his family and his town if he had never been born. In its own slurpy, bittersweet way, the picture is well done, but it's doggerel trying to pass as art. With Donna Reed, Gloria Grahame, Thomas Mitchell, and Ward Bond. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 12-14. . . . ¶ Thalia; Dec. 18.)

The Man Who Came to Dinner (1942)—In the thirties, the unctuous, sentimental Alexander Woollcott was loved by millions of radio listeners; Woollcott the outrageous master of euphonious insults was loved and hated by a small circle. Two members of this circle, George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart, made him the hero and the target of their 1939 Broadway hit—a cheerful spoof on celebrity in that period. In this film version, the devastatingly adroit Monty Woolley plays the arrogant, infantile Sheridan Whiteside, who goes on a lecture tour and breaks his hip while attending a dinner in his honor at the home of solid, boring fans. Stuck in that home until his hip mends, he takes it over and orders the adoring residents around. With Bette Davis, Reginald Gardiner, Jimmy Durante, and Ann Sheridan. Directed by William Keighley. (Regency; Dec. 16-17.)

Men . . .—When the handsome, self-centered Julius (Heiner Lauterbach), a Munich adver-

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

tising executive, discovers that his wife (Ulrike Kriener) has been having an affair with the oafish Stefan (Uwe Ochsenknecht), a long-haired bohemian, he wants to know what Stefan's attraction is, so he assumes a false name and moves in with him. Julius takes some kind of revenge by turning Stefan into an orderly bourgeois with a regular job; while that happens, whimsical gags are tossed together with a jocular feminist exposé of men's attitudes toward women. The picture is harmless and insipid, in the mode of French farces such as "Cousin, Cousine;" it sags in the middle and then collapses in an absurdist ending. Written and directed by Doris Dörrie. In German. (9/8/86) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)—Frank Capra's attempt to repeat the country-boy-defeating-the-city-slickers formula of "Mr. Deeds" succeeded commercially, but the picture has more of the heartfelt in it than is good for the stomach. James Stewart is the naïve small-town hero sent to the Senate; Jean Arthur is the knowing secretary who is at first horrified by his simplicity. When the young Senator's illusions are shattered, he stages a filibuster, defeats the villains, and reëstablishes the whole government on a firm and honorable basis. No one else can balance the ups and downs of wistful sentiment and corny humor the way Capra can—but if anyone else should learn to, kill him. The cast includes Claude Rains, Guy Kibbee, Beulah Bondi, Edward Arnold, and Thomas Mitchell. (Thalia; Dec. 18.)

Mona Lisa—Directed by the Irish novelist turned moviemaker Neil Jordan, the whole movie has some of the potency of cheap music that's represented by the title song (in Nat King Cole's 1950 recording). The short, chunky Bob Hoskins is tremendous as a one-time petty crook, just emerged from prison; given the job of chauffering a black call girl (Cathy Tyson) on her nightly rounds, he falls in love with her. She sets him to searching for a friend she's worried about—a blond fifteen-year-old heroin addict. As he makes his way through the strip joints and whores' hang-outs; he's sickened by the way the girls are mistreated, and he sees that his old boss (Michael Caine) is in the rotten thick of it. Jordan shows a gift for making the emotional atmosphere visual, and vice versa. And the way he uses baroque touches and the clichés of old thrillers they become part of a fluid, enjoyable texture. With Robbie Coltrane, Clarke Peters, and Zoe Nathenson. Script by Jordan and David Leland. (6/16/86) (New Gramercy; Dec. 12-18. . . . ¶ Film Forum; starting Dec. 12.)

My Beautiful Laundrette—A startlingly fresh movie about life in South London among the surly white street gangs and the Pakistani immigrants. In the foreground is a love affair between a dark-eyed, softly handsome, almost flowerlike Pakistani teen-ager, Omar (Gordon Warnecke), and a young blond street lout, Johnny (Daniel Day Lewis). They become partners when Omar persuades his slumlord uncle (Saeed Jaffrey) to let him have a ratty-looking failed laundrette, and the two boys, using stolen money, turn it into the laundrette of their flashy dreams. Directed by Stephen Frears, from a witty script by the young playwright Hanif Kureishi, the film catches you up in the racketeering and decay of modern big-city life; you feel that your blinders have been taken off. It's an enormous pleasure to see a movie that's really about something, and that doesn't lay on any syrupy coating to make the subject go down easily. (It's down before you notice it.) The cast includes Shirley Anne Field, Roshan Seth, Rita Wolf, and Souad Faress. (3/10/86) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Los Olvidados (1950; "The Young and the Damned")—Set in Mexico, Luis Buñuel's ruthless—almost surgical—examination of how the poor prey on one another is the most horrifying of all films about juvenile crime. Buñuel doesn't treat his characters as ideas but as morally responsible human beings; there is little of the familiar American-movie cant that makes everyone responsible for juvenile crimes except the juveniles. There's no pathos in this film; it's a squalid tragedy that causes the viewer to feel a moral ter-

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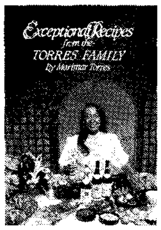
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ror. Buñuel, whose early work fascinated Freud, creates scenes that shock one psychologically. Among them here is the celebrated dream sequence—perhaps the greatest of all movie dream sequences; it is disturbing long after the lacerations of the more realistic material have healed. The cast includes Estela Inda and Roberto Cobo. In Spanish. (Thalia; Dec. 17.)

Peggy Sue Got Married—Distressed by her marital troubles, Peggy Sue (Kathleen Turner), the mother of two grownup children, collapses at the twenty-fifth reunion of her high-school class, and when she wakes up she discovers that she has gone back in time to the spring of 1960. Directed by Francis Coppola, this is a dream movie that asks whether Peggy Sue, knowing what she does at forty-three, should marry the same boy—passionate Charlie (Nicolas Cage), the only man she ever dated—knowing that he'll turn into the man who introduces himself on television as Crazy Charlie, the Appliance King. The underlying question is: Should Peggy Sue reconcile with her husband or go ahead and get a divorce? Coppola's efforts to bring depth to this material that has no depth make the picture seem groggy. It's as if he were trying to reach through a veil of fog. With Barbara Harris, Barry Miller, and Kevin J. O'Connor. (10/20/86) (Gemini, Quad Cinema, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

A Room with a View—Adapted from the early novel by E. M. Forster, this is a whimsical social comedy about a muddled young English girl (Helena Bonham-Carter) who desires yet fears sexual love; she runs away from the man (Julian Sands) who stirs her emotions, and becomes engaged to a rich twit (Daniel Day Lewis). Bonham-Carter lacks the carriage and presence of a trained actress, and Sands is playing Forster's flimsy—almost abstract—dream of a natural, uninhibited lover, and is rather vague. But the movie is well paced, and it never loses its hold on a viewer's affections, because it's so thoroughly inhabited. It's more than a little precious, but it's a piece of charming foolishness. With Denholm Elliott, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Simon Callow, and Rosemary Leach. It was directed by James Ivory, from a script by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala that pares down the text skillfully and takes much of its lively, dizzy dialogue directly from Forster. (3/24/86) (Quad Cinema, and Embassy 72nd St.)

Round Midnight—Most of Bertrand Tavernier's mournful, blue-toned movie, which, an opening title tells us, was "inspired by incidents in the lives of Francis Paudras and Bud Powell," is set in Paris in 1959. The French jazz enthusiast Paudras is now called Francis Borier and is played by François Cluzet, and Powell, the great bebop pianist, who suffered frequent nervous breakdowns and then made a new life abroad, is now the dazed, alcoholic tenor-sax man Dale Turner, and is played by the near-legendary Dexter Gordon. The enthusiast is a saintly groupie. You know what kind of movie it's going to be when you see this guy out in a drenching rain, crouched against the building where the American is playing, because he doesn't have the money to go in. Cluzet is soaking wet, but his eyes shine and he listens to Dexter Gordon's music worshipfully. The French are pretty hard to take when they celebrate how much they love American art. You may come out with the feeling that Tavernier is proud of the gloomy dullness of the movie, that he sees virtue in it. With Sandra Reaves-Phillips, Lonette McKee, John Berry, Martin Scorsese, Philippe Noiret, and many well-known musicians. (Plaza, and R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin; through Dec. 18. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; starting Dec. 19.)

Shane (1953)—The Western stranger in town consciously turned into Galahad on the range. With chivalric purity as his motivation, the enigmatic Shane (Alan Ladd) defeats enemies twice his size—the largest is the Prince of Darkness himself, Jack Palance. The earth-loving Wyoming homesteaders befriended by Shane include Van Heflin, Jean Arthur as his wife, and Brandon deWilde as their child. This George Stevens film is overplanned and uninspired: Westerns are better when they're not so self-importantly self-conscious. With Edgar Buchanan, Elisha Cook, Jr., Ben Johnson, and Emile Meyer. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 18.)

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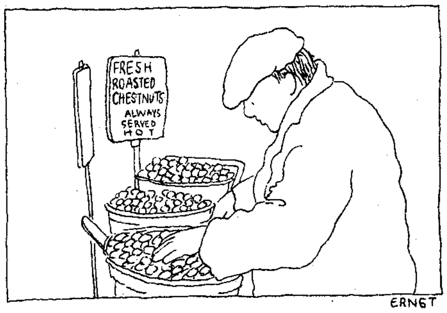
She's Gotta Have It—The voluptuous, easygoing Nola (Tracy Camila Johns), a graphic designer who lives in the black bohemian world in Brooklyn, is happily juggling three lovers when she's faced by a mock crisis: each of the three men has turned possessive and wants to be her one and only. That's the premise of this quick-witted sex comedy written, directed, and edited by the twenty-nine-year-old Spike Lee, who shot it in 16-mm. in twelve days, on an almost nonexistent budget. Nola, her three lovers, and her family and friends explain themselves directly to the camera, and the film's basic set is Nola's bed; you can't shoot a movie much cheaper or faster than that. Lee's economies become part of what's enjoyable about the film, and he keeps it all sparking and bouncing along. With Tommy Redmond Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee himself. (10/6/86) (Quad Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

The Shop Around the Corner (1940)—Close to perfection—one of the most beautifully acted and paced romantic comedies ever made in this country. It is set in the enclosed world of the people who work together in a small department store; Margaret Sullavan and James Stewart are the employees who bicker with each other, and in no other movie has this kind of love-hate been made so convincing. Their performances are full of grace notes; when you watch later James Stewart films, you may wonder what became of this other deft, sensitive pre-drawling Stewart. As for Sullavan, this is a peerless performance: she makes the shopgirl's pretensions believable, lyrical, and funny. Directed by Ernst Lubitsch. With Frank Morgan, Joseph Schildkraut, William Tracy, Sara Haden, Edwin Maxwell, and Inez Courtney. (Regency; Dec. 18-20.)

Simon of the Desert (1965)—Luis Buñuel made this short satirical feature (forty-five minutes) in Mexico, just before he did "Belle de Jour." It's a jovial comedy about the temptations of St. Simeon Stylites, the fifth-century desert anchorite who spent thirty-seven years preaching to pilgrims from his perch on top of a column; in both a literal and figurative sense it's a shaggy-saint story. Simon (Claudio Brook) performs his miracles, and the crowds evaluate them like a bunch of New York cabdrivers discussing a parade: whatever it was, it wasn't much. The Devil, in the female form of Silvia Pinal, tempts Simon and at one point frames him in front of the local priests, who are more than willing to believe the worst of him. He falls, of course, because of the animal instincts he has tried to deny. Buñuel couldn't raise the money to finish the film, and he resorted to a bummer of a jokey ending in which the foolish saint is transported to the modern world and left, a lost soul, in a Greenwich Village discothèque full of dancing teen-agers. In Spanish. (Thalia; Dec. 17.)

Something Wild—Jonathan Demme's romantic screwball comedy isn't just about a carefree kook (Melanie Griffith) and a pompous man from Wall Street (Jeff Daniels). The movie is about crossing over—about getting high on anarchic, larcenous behavior and then being confronted with ruthless, sadistic criminality. This rough-edged comedy has a freedom that takes off from its genre framework; it breaks conventions and turns into a scary slapstick thriller. Demme weaves the stylization of rock videos into the fabric of the movie; there are almost fifty songs (or parts of songs), several of them performed onscreen. This is a party movie with both a dark and a light side. With Ray Liotta, Dana Preu, and Margaret Colin. (11/17/86) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ 34th St. East; through Dec. 11. . . . ¶ Baronet; through Dec. 18.)



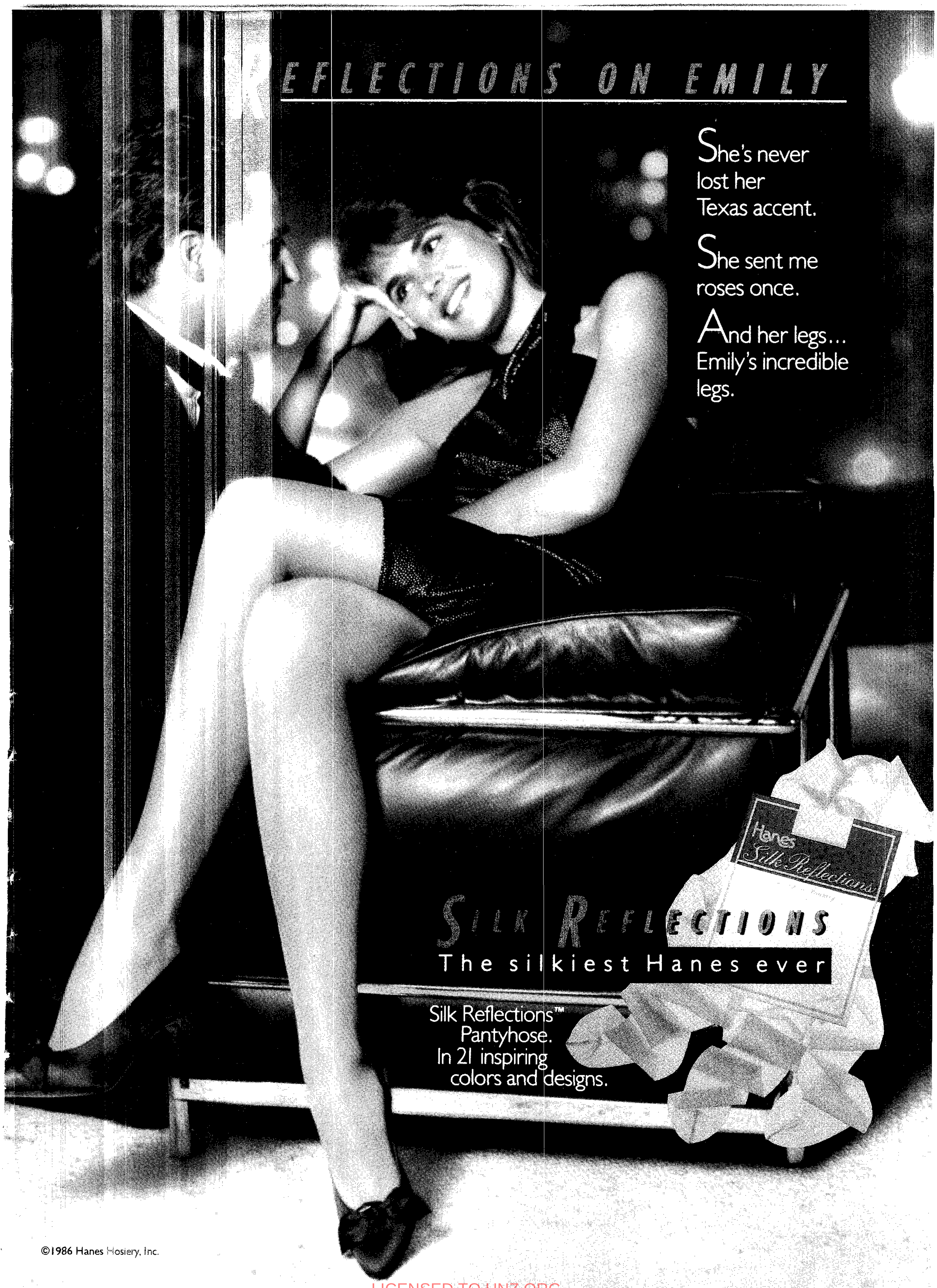
Song of the South (1946)—Musical version of Joel Chandler Harris's stories—sentimental, and offensive to some, but often effective. From the Disney studios, and employing both animation and live actors (James Baskette, Hattie McDaniel, Bobby Driscoll, Lucille Watson, Ruth Warrick, Luana Patten). (Eastside Cinema. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex, and Olympia Quad; through Dec. 18, matinées only. . . . ¶ Guild; through Dec. 18. . . . ¶ New Embassy 49th Street; through Dec. 18. No performances Tuesday, Dec. 16.)

Stand By Me—On a summer weekend in 1959, four twelve- and thirteen-year-old boys from the fictional Castle Rock, Oregon (pop. 1,281), go on an overnight hike in the woods outside town to look for the body of a boy their age who has been missing for several days. The four, misfits who feel rejected, keep intuiting one another's emotions, and they're plucky—when they get in tight spots, they stand by each other. Rob Reiner's film, taken from Stephen King's autobiographical novella "The Body," overdoses on sincerity and nostalgia. Seeing it is like watching an extended Christmas Special of "The Waltons." With Wil Wheaton, River Phoenix, Jerry O'Connell, Corey Feldman, Andy Lindberg, and, as the narrator, Richard Dreyfuss. (9/8/86) (Embassy. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad. Evenings only.)

True Stories—This first feature directed by David Byrne, of Talking Heads, is laid out like a musical-comedy documentary about a town, except that the town—Virgil, Texas—is imaginary. Byrne, the narrator and observer, introduces us to the townspeople who are about to take part in the pageantry of the Texas Sesquicentennial with their own "Celebration of Specialness." Byrne is looking for a true mythic image of America; Virgil is Our Town, it's Anytown, U.S.A., and the movie is about banality and eccentricity and consumerism. Byrne sets up the material for satirical sequences, yet he doesn't give it a satirical spin. The picture's tone is often insecure, but, working with the crack cinematographer Ed Lachman, Byrne brings a new visual sensibility to the screen (a respect for pared-down plainness), and after a rather shaky opening the characters themselves begin to engage us. With John Goodman, Jo Harvey Allen, Tito Larriva, Roebuck (Pops) Staples, Swoosie Kurtz, Spalding Gray, Annie McEnroe, and Alix Elias. The script is by Byrne, Beth Henley, and Stephen Tobolowsky. (10/20/86) (8th St. Playhouse, and Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ Beekman; through Dec. 18.)

Variety (1925)—A German classic of sadomasochism in a circus setting, with the master masochist actor Emil Jannings as an acrobat who leaves his wife for a foreign girl (plumply erotic, saucer-eyed Lya de Putti); he forms a trapeze act with the girl and a younger acrobat (Warwick Ward)—who inevitably seduces her. The enduring power of the movie, directed by E. A. Dupont, is not in its far from original story but in the restless, subjective camera and the fast editing, which make it an almost voluptuous experience. Silent. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 15.)

Weekend in Havana (1941)—Probably the cheerfullest weekend in Havana's history, what with Carmen Miranda, Alice Faye, John Payne, Cesar Romero, Leonid Kinskey, George Barbier, and everybody else on the Twentieth Century-Fox lot beaming with fatuous good will. Carmen Miranda wears a headgear of grapefruit, grapes, apples, oranges, bananas, lemons, pineapples, and an occasional small plum. Walter Lang directed. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 17.)



REFLECTIONS ON EMILY

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She sent me roses once.

And her legs… Emily's incredible legs.

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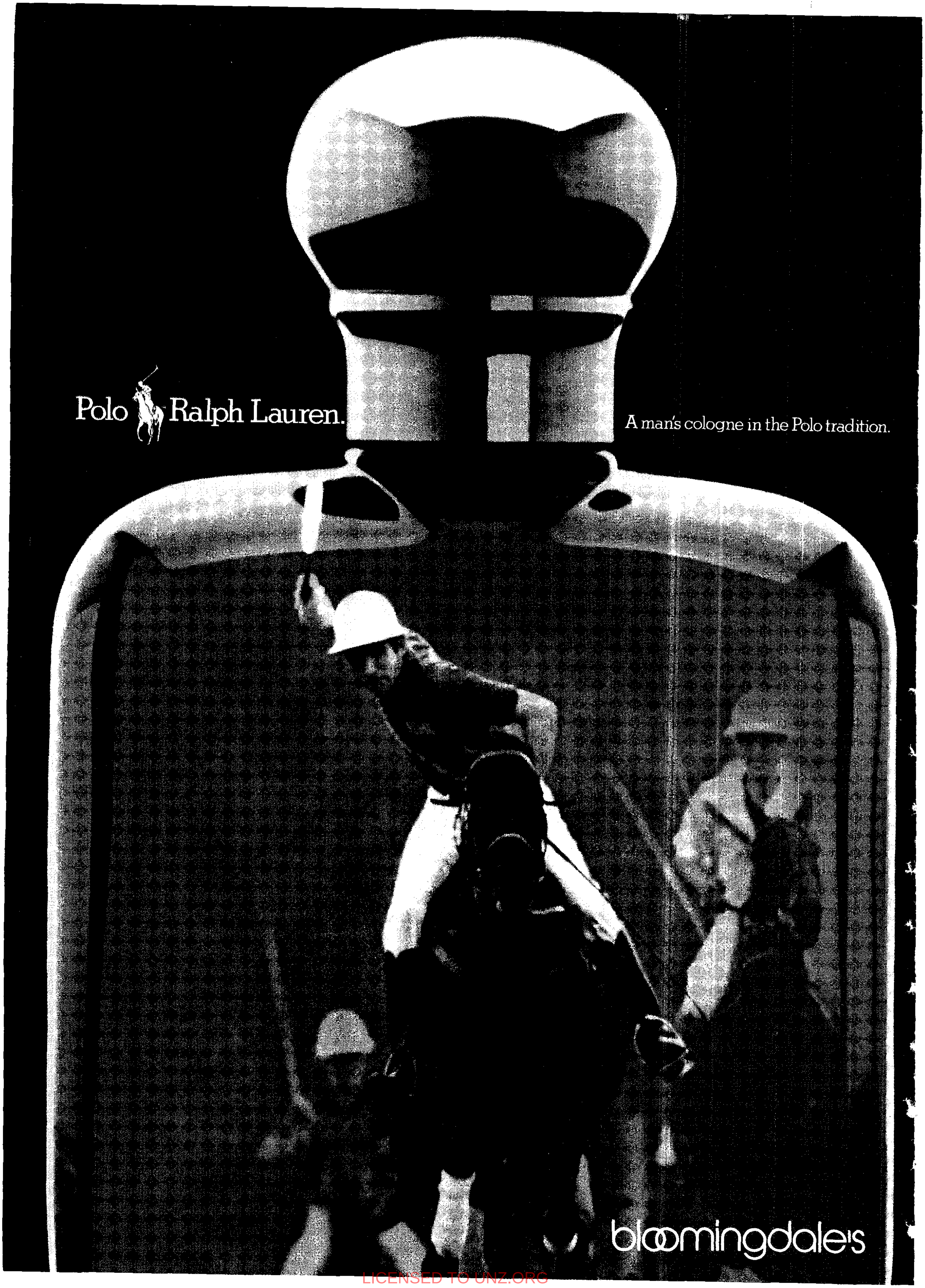
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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

NOT since Richard Nixon was driven from office under threat of impeachment has the country witnessed a more dramatic reversal of political fortune than the recent abrupt decline in the popularity and power of the Reagan Administration, brought about by the spreading secret-funding-of-the-Contras-with-money-received-for-secret-arms-shipments-to-Iran-in-return-for-its-help-in-releasing-American-hostages-held-in-Lebanon scandal. (No shorthand phrase for the affair has yet stuck. Like business and so much else these days, scandal has gone multinational, and thus has spoiled the usual practice of using local place names, like Teapot Dome or Watergate, to designate episodes of mischief.) "Disarray," "a shambles," "tottering"—such are the words that have been used, by Republicans as well as Democrats, to describe the state of the Administration under the impact of the scandal. As for remedies, Republican Senator Richard Lugar, for one, has suggested "a new beginning, a new Administration." In political life, these words are the language of disaster, of downfall, and although few observers foresee that President Reagan will fail to finish his term in office many fear that his role for the rest of his term could be reduced to that of a caretaker. As the public reaction to the scandal demonstrates, American Presidents are, in the last analysis, still held strictly accountable for the errors of their Administrations—so strictly that in other countries mystified observers find us profligate in our use or abuse of our leaders. What should surprise and disturb even an American, however, is our apparent inability, in making our will felt, to avail ourselves of the means provided by the Constitution for that purpose—our quadrennial Presidential elections. Instead, we now seem to prefer to rouse ourselves at midterm to whatever misdeeds are going on, appoint a special prosecutor (or independent counsel), and a special congressional committee of some sort, lay investigative siege to the White House, and then sit back and watch the electoral mandate given by our own votes crumble in the opinion polls. Through such an after-the-fact reverse landslide, George McGovern belatedly defeated Richard Nixon; and now hapless Walter Mondale, the seemingly foredoomed candidate of 1984, can await his hour of vindication. In American politics in recent years, a landslide election victory, it seems, has become an ill omen for the one who wins it.

Our penchant for the midterm rejection of Presidents—itself a part of a broader practice, consistently followed since the assassination of John F. Kennedy, in 1963, of discrediting in one way or another each of those whom we have elected to the Presidency—suggests the presence of a more profound disorder in the body politic than anything that can be accounted for by the overzealousness of Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North or, for that matter, by some structural deficiency in the National Security Council. The fact is that the present crisis, like the Watergate crisis of more than a decade ago, grew out of certain broad policies. These days, people sometimes speak of the downfall of President Nixon as if it were something almost purely accidental—the result, perhaps, of a mishandling by the President of a fairly trivial crime against the political opposition. Actually, the secrecy, the duplicity, and the contempt for Congress, the press, the public, and the law which were revealed in Watergate had their origins in the Vietnam War, which President Nixon had promised in his first election campaign to end but instead decided to prolong in the hope of achieving favorable terms. The lines connecting Nixon's Vietnam policy, including his secret bombing of Cambodia, with the Watergate crisis are clear and direct, and the gap that opened between him and the other institutions of government as well as the public did not close until he was out of office and the Vietnam War was lost.

In some ways, of course, President Reagan is the opposite of Richard Nixon. Whereas President Nixon, in his incarnation as the infamous "P" of the Watergate-tape transcripts, was revealed as an elaborately devious man, President Reagan often appears so trusting and credulous that he seems to sincerely believe the doubtful or untrue stories he so often relates to the public in his press conferences and other appearances. (Neither man, however, has shown a great devotion to the factual truth.) The striking difference in the character of the two men, however, only underscores the striking similarities between the policies that led them into their difficulties. Both Presidents sought to expand wars in small Third World countries. Both sought to keep their actions secret. (Nixon, characteristically, at first succeeded, whereas Reagan, equally characteristically, even at first failed—precipitating the lengthy, paradoxical *public* debate about whether "covert" aid should be sent to the Contras.) Both Administrations circumvented, or actually defied, Congress. Both circumvented the normal channels of their own executive branch, carving out secret, independent channels of command. In both Administrations, covert action, once it was launched, proved to have a life of its own. (In the Nixon Administration, it took a few years for G. Gordon

Liddy to evolve from an investigator of national-security leaks into a burglar of premises of the political opposition. In the Reagan Administration, it apparently took only a matter of months for the secret ransoming of the hostages to spawn the secret funding of the Contras.) Both Presidents failed in their military objectives. (The South Vietnamese were defeated by the North Vietnamese, and the Contras, though they are still in the field, have yet to show any progress after six years of fighting.) Both Presidents waged their secret campaigns in order to uphold the "credibility" of the United States, but both, in the process, wound up devastating their own credibility, and, with it, that of the United States.

It seems astonishing that only twelve years after one President was driven from office another President should head down the very path that led to this result. It seems astonishing, at any rate, until one recalls that *rejecting* what at one time were thought to be the lessons of the Vietnam War has been a major objective of the Reagan Administration since it first arrived in office, and that the attempt to unseat the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua was conceived as a means of accomplishing this. The caution born of the Vietnam War was seen by the Administration as a sort of disease—the Vietnam "syndrome"—whose symptoms were a crippling reluctance to use force in world affairs, and whose cure would be the effective application of force somewhere in the world. The war in Vietnam had been wise and good, the Administration argued; only the failure to pursue it to the end was a mistake. If in Vietnam the United States lost ground, in Nicaragua it would regain it. If in Vietnam our country was "humiliated," in Nicaragua we would "stand tall." If in Vietnam we failed, learning the false "lesson" that there were "limits" on the effective use of our military power, in Nicaragua we would succeed, restoring our faith in our power and in our ability and our right to make use of it in the world. The project made sense in terms of the original objectives in Vietnam. That war had never been fought to gain territory—Vietnam had little concrete importance for the United States. Rather, it was fought to demonstrate the credibility of our power, as at least three Presidents tirelessly reminded us. Not any result in Vietnam itself but the lesson that our success there would teach the world was the main aim of the war. According to that logic, it was quite appropriate to try to restore in a wholly different part of the world the credibility that had been damaged in Vietnam. The Reagan Administration plunged into its Contra venture, and the results are now before us. Military force has again failed to bring about the political result that was wanted. The people of a small country have again declined to take direction from American leaders; they wish, it seems, to achieve their own successes and make their own mistakes. Secrecy has again bred illegality, and illegality has again bred more illegality. The secrets have again erupted into public view, and a Presidency is again at risk. In a sense, President Reagan, by denying the lessons of Vietnam, has become the latest—and, we hope, the last—of the casualties of that war. And the lessons, once again, are clear: The ability of the United States to impose its political will on other countries—even small ones—by the use of force *is* limited. Those who wage military campaigns secretly and illegally abroad *do* jeopardize the integrity of our political institutions at home. A war fought without the consent of Congress or of the American people *is* antithetical to the basic principles according to which our country is organized. Presidents who wage such war *do* place their Presidencies at risk. These lessons are not a disease—not a syndrome. They are well and truly the lessons of history, paid for in blood and now twice taught. We, as a nation, had better learn them soon.

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FROM the March, 1986, report on "Human Rights in Nicaragua" (a report that covers violations by both the Sandinistas and the Contras), issued by the Americas Watch monitoring group:

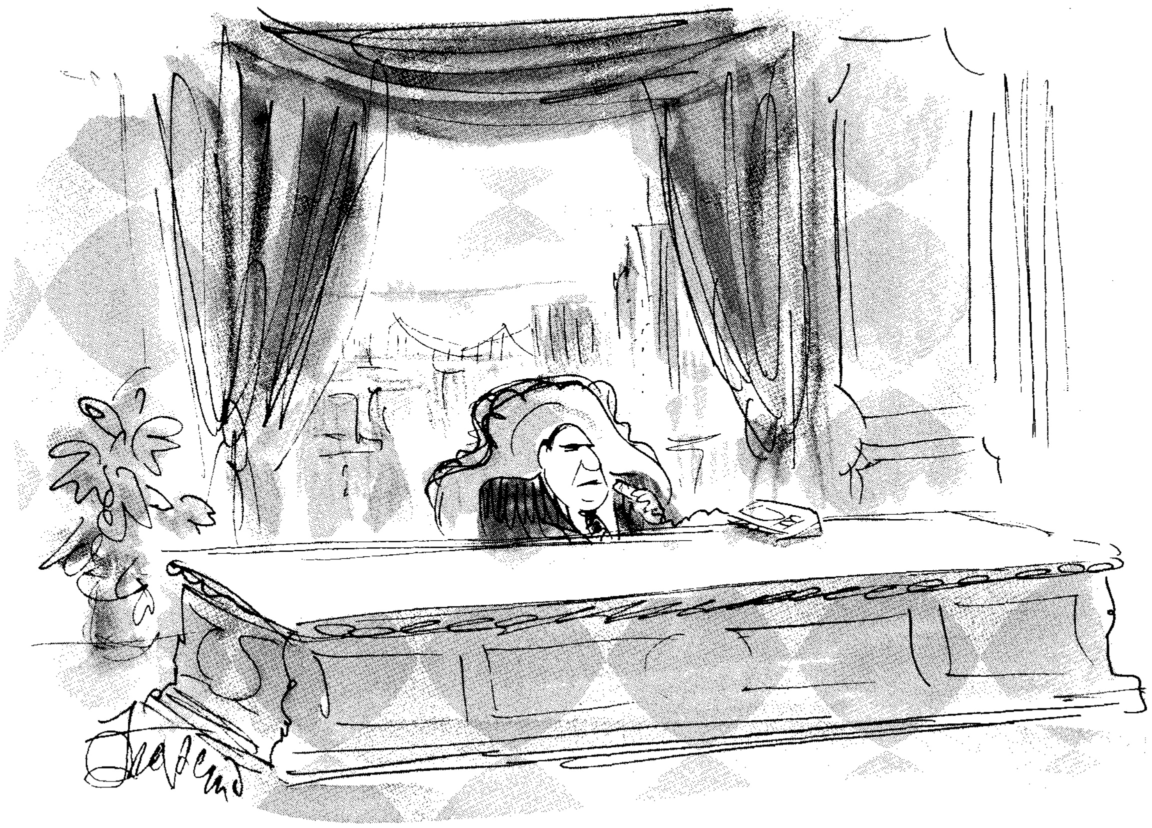
> On September 3, 1985, at about 6:30 a.m., the *contras* stopped a passenger truck on the highway between Almendro and La Flor, in Zelaya. There were about sixty passengers in the truck, all civilians. The *contras* robbed everyone of their watches and money, and in some cases of their shoes. They asked everybody for IDs, and checked them thoroughly. When they discovered the identity of Reina Isabel Rocha Alvarado, they accused her of being the sister of someone they called an assassin. She said she was his cousin. Her mother tried to intervene, but she was pushed aside. Reina was taken away with Gabriel Alonso, an 18-year-old draftee serving in Juigalpa. He was in civilian clothes, but when they searched his backpack they found a radio made in Cuba. Reina was active in the Sandinista Youth and had one brother in the Army and one in the police. Neither Reina nor Gabriel have been found, but a woman who escaped from the *contras* has said that she saw Reina still alive some time after [her] capture. Gabriel is reported to have been killed.

The Boland Amendment, passed by Congress in October, 1984, prohibited United States military aid to the Contras for a period of six months. At President Reagan's urging, Congress authorized new aid this October. In the intervening two years, it now appears, the White House funded an interim program of Contra aid. This effort, of course, required the cover of darkness which is now being slowly lifted. The Administration, from what is known so far, "blundered." The Administration behaved "amateurishly." The Administration "acted illegally." All these charges will be selectly investigated and specially prosecuted and blue-ribbonly examined in the next months. But much of what the Administration was responsible for will not be discussed.

> On [July 4, 1985], the FDN [the leading Contra group] attacked the cooperative [Puertas Azules, in Miraflor, Estelí] and set fire to seventeen houses used as living quarters. . . . Besides the houses, the *contras* burned the school, the health center, and an office. . . . On July 4, the FDN also kidnapped six of the workers, and murdered three. . . . Later on July 4, the FDN contingent also attacked the neighboring cooperative, called Oro Verde, where they burned the food supply and killed the animals. There, they tortured and almost decapitated a member of the cooperative, Candelario Espino, 76, who was too old to run.

It is an open question whether the people of the United States need feel morally responsible for what happened at our government's instigation in this period. Polls taken during the two years (and before and after) showed Americans opposing military aid to the Contras, and our elected representatives in Congress for that two-year stretch heeded those wishes. On the other hand, we reëlected as President a man who considered the Contras the moral equals of Samuel and John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and George Washington. Whoever must bear the blame, people died.

> Eleuterio Matute, 41, was murdered by the FDN at his house in Cruz de Piedra, a



“Mr. S. Claus, North Pole. Dear Santa:”

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hamlet ten miles from Condega, Estelí, on December 27, 1985. Mr. Matute was a farmer who was very active in support of the Sandinista government. He was the coördinator of the local *Comité de Defensa Sandinista* (CDS), a health brigadier and a volunteer member of the militia. He was also a lay leader in the Roman Catholic parish. According to witnesses, the FDN came that day, around midnight, and posing as the Army, called out to Eleuterio to come out and go on watch with them. When he did not respond, the *contras* broke a window, threw a grenade through the door and opened fire into the house. Other members of the family managed to escape, but Eleuterio and a 16-year-old son, Benigno, were apprehended inside the house. Another son, 14-years-old, hid inside the house and was not noticed. The *contras* called for the older son, Guillermo, 18, who escaped. Mr. Matute's wife and the younger children, including a seven-month-old baby, who was carried out, made it out of the house and hid in a ravine, and later in a neighbor's house. The next morning they returned, to find the corpses of Eleuterio and Benigno. According to those who examined the body, Eleuterio's abdomen had been slit open from the chest bone down; he had been punched with a knife or bayonet many times in the chest; and his tongue had been cut out. The examiner who inspected the body said the heart had been taken out. Benigno's body, found a short distance from the house, bore three bullet wounds.

We will all spend the next weeks or months watching the Iran-Nicaragua drama play out. Commentators will speak solemnly (and often wisely) about our “image abroad” and the President's “ability to govern effectively” and the “reaffirmation of the separation of powers.” But at some level all this will remain a diversion, full of interesting turns. The reason it is hard for us to remember that what happens in Washington matters is that it often doesn't matter much to us, to our daily lives. If we live above the poverty line, our battles for love and security and against boredom and neurosis go on much the same whatever the President does or says. Taxes go up or down, the State Department tilts toward Iran or Iraq, and all the while we eat the same amount for dinner and wonder about whom we will marry or what car we will buy. But there are people who live or die depending on what the people we elect do or do not do. It is, perhaps, possible to argue that they must be killed in the name of some greater good (though few of us really think so), but it is cowardly and shameful to ignore them. These people have real names (in this case, Spanish names) and real ages and real addresses; they have homes that can be left standing or burned down, and fields that can be harvested or destroyed; they have hearts that can be left beating in their chests or cut out.

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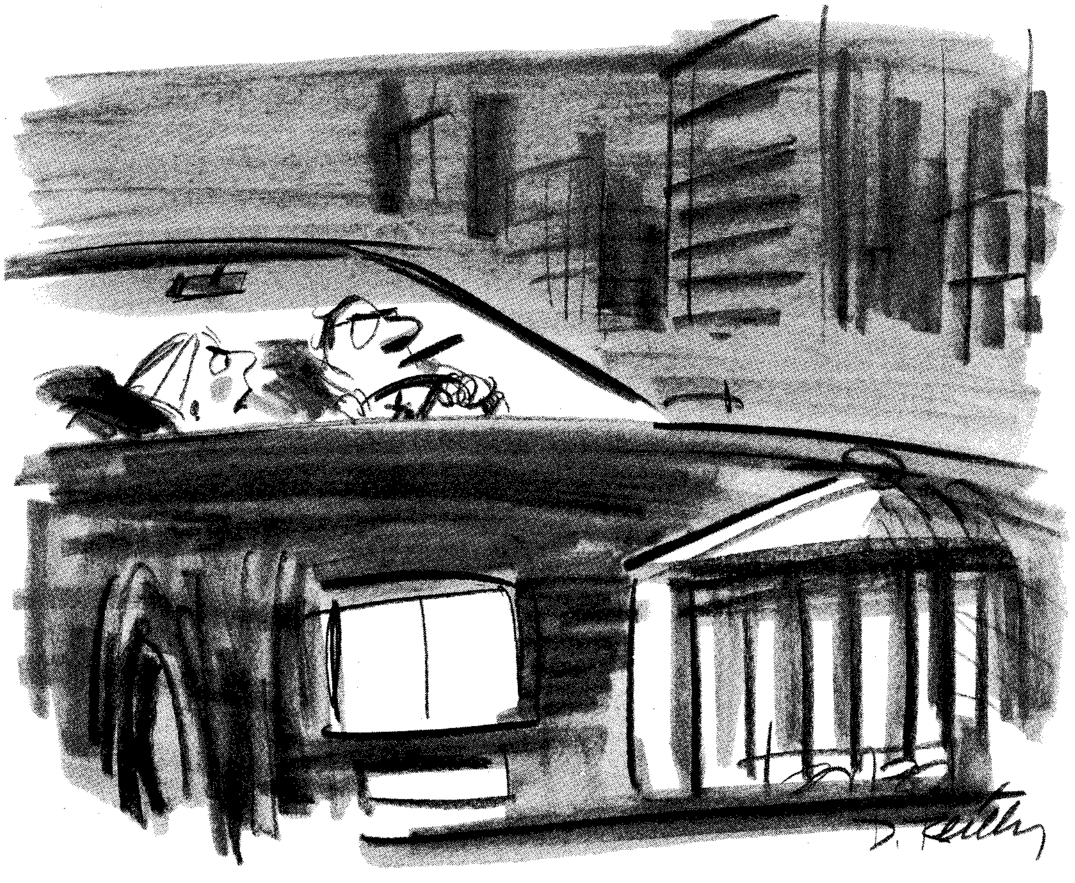
Chilly

THE Manhattan street plan deviates from its basic grid only twice—once, of course, below Fourteenth Street, in the twisting welter of alleys and side streets and diagonals that make up the financial district, SoHo, and the Village; and again way uptown, above about 193rd Street, where the grid suddenly tilts east around Inwood Hill Park, and the main thoroughfares have names like Vermilyea, Post, and Isham. It was there—at 207th and Tenth Avenue, in the chilly shadow of the Broadway local train—that the Shorewalkers formed up the Sunday before last to hike the edge of the Harlem River Gorge. Cyrus A. Adler, a visionary who hopes to build a trail the three-hundred-and-thirty-mile length of the Hudson, leads the Shorewalkers, a band that hikes around the edges of the metropolitan area. About thirty of them showed up this chilly day (the sun had been out, but then the clouds took over and turned things steely, and chilly), including: a woman we had last met at a lecture given by some Park Rangers on the mating of horseshoe crabs (she urged them to put a crab they had pulled from the ocean for demonstration purposes back in the ocean, where it belonged); a woman who said she had been “one of the Murray Hill Tree Ladies,” a group that helped save a large tree by sitting in its branches and pelting workmen with eggs and grapefruit when they tried to cut it down; a moviemaker who once spent two days filming a scene along the Harlem River which involved a hearse flying through the air and into the drink; a botanist specializing in mosses of the West Indies; and a man who has a Ph.D. in “urban geography” and knows scads about the origin of the street plan for Queens, which is much less neat than the Manhattan grid.

This band set off across the University Heights Bridge—it was a little chilly up there in the open—to the Bronx. Heading south on the other side, it doubled down onto the Metro-North railroad tracks that take commuters to and from Westchester, walking cautiously, in single file, next to a rail that carries seven hundred volts of electricity. "That plastic cover keeps you from getting shocked," one man said. "At least, I think it does. I'm not going to touch it and find out. I won't eat most wild mushrooms, either, though I will eat almost any plant." A little way down the tracks, the group came to Roberto Clemente State Park. A high chain-link fence topped with barbed wire surrounds the huge running track and playing field at the north end of the park. Instead of getting inside and walking, say, four feet from the shore, the Shorewalkers chose to walk around the outside of the fence, on a narrow ledge directly above the Harlem River. Everyone had to hold on to the fence at some points to keep from falling in, and the journey was made more difficult because weeds, which someone identified as false chrysanthemum, had grown to a height of about six feet along the ledge. The Shorewalkers looked sort of like mountain natives, in pictures of, say, the Andes, inching along treacherous cliffside paths, except that most of the Shorewalkers had on sturdy walking shoes, and it was chillier than it is in the Andes except at very high altitudes or latitudes. Two State Park policemen were waiting at the far end of this passage to point out that "dangerous conditions" had existed along the route and someone could have got hurt. But Lewis could have got hurt, too, or Clark.

After that, the line wound along a wider road next to the tracks. The road went under the Washington (not the George Washington) Bridge and under the Hamilton Bridge. Between the Hamilton Bridge and High Bridge (part of the system that carried the first outside water into Manhattan in the eighteen-forties), it passed an extensive collection of flimsy shacks connected by flimsier walls. Several cars were parked outside the hovels, but the only sound was of dogs barking. A sign said "VICIOUS DOG—BEWARE," and another sign said "ATTACK DOGS BEING TRAINED." It was mysterious.

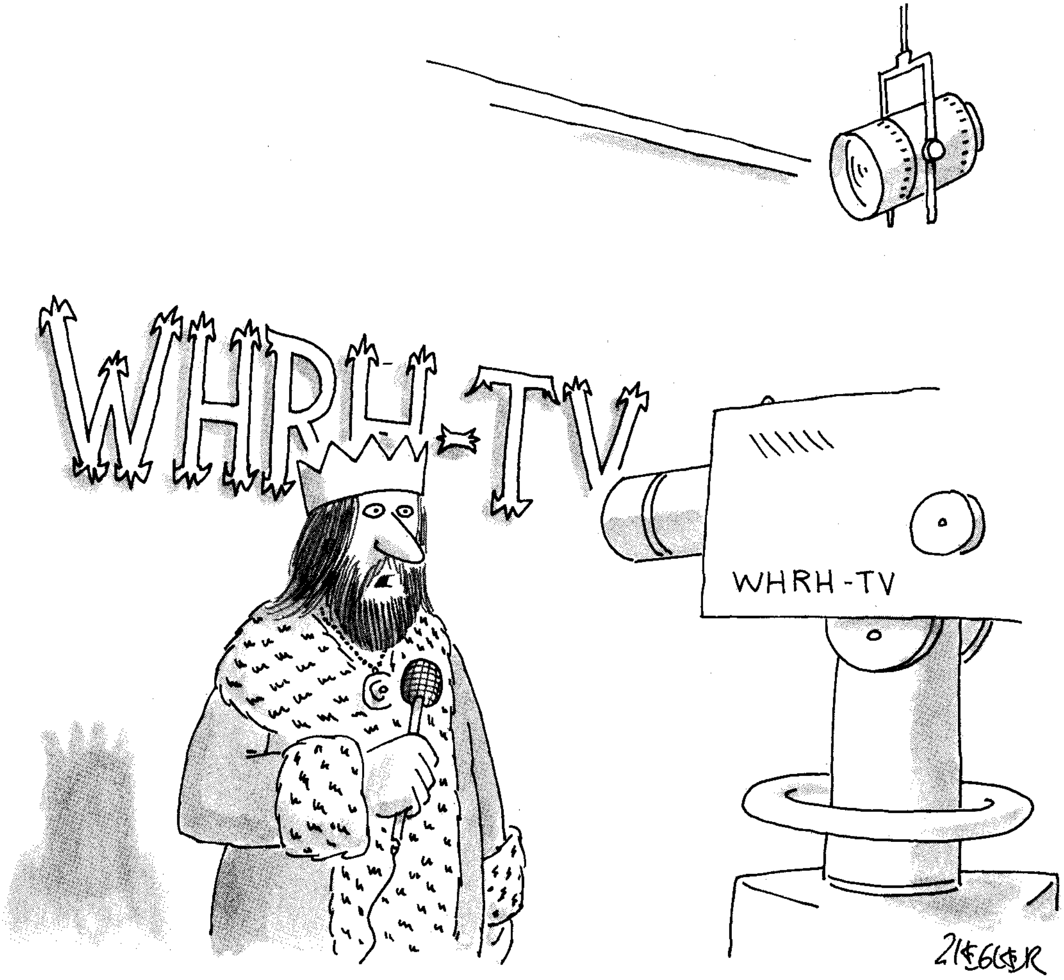
This stretch of the riverside, roughly paralleling Washington Heights on the Manhattan side as it meanders down to Coogan's Bluff and the home of the old Polo Grounds, is weedy and desolate and, on gray days like this, chilly. Vast stretches of abandoned concrete underfoot imply that someone once had plans for the land, but of what sort is unclear. A wide variety of trash had been left by the side of the road—mostly the usual, but at one spot a pair of crutches and a wheelchair. The Shorewalkers veered away from the actual riverbank near Yankee Stadium and walked through the Bronx Terminal Market, where nearly all the city's bodegas buy their tropical fruits. The signs were mostly in English and Spanish, but many had recently been repainted to include Korean characters. On this chilly day, a number of men had gathered around a fire in a trash can, and the general picture was South Bronx bleak. The Shorewalkers looked a little like a street gang that had got off at the wrong subway stop—the Hell's Library-Card Holders, maybe. But nobody seemed to mind as their column wound past the Praying Mantis School of Kung Fu and the Apex School of Criminology and Loss Prevention, crossed the Willis Avenue Bridge back into Manhattan, and walked briskly along 125th Street to the I.R.T. station, where it was warm.



"I'm supposed to be sort of the vermouth in this marriage, right?"

Breaker of Tiles

A BLOCK and a half from the Thirty-ninth Avenue subway stop in Long Island City, Queens, and just down the street from Just a Pub, lives the World's Strongest Man, self-styled. Avram Lucian Iusan greeted us at the door of his first-floor apartment with a loud hello and a handshake. One notices a handshake only when it is different—hard or soft or, as in the case of Mr. Iusan, a little alarming. The heel of his palm (both palms) has developed, over a lifetime of breaking ceramic tiles, a bulbous callus, perhaps two inches thick. The calluses are gray and dead-looking, and against your palm they rise up like the Himalayas on a relief atlas. When Mr. Gorilla Mon-soon, a professional wrestler, first shook hands with Mr. Iusan, he backed away in mild horror. Mr. Iusan took out a license from the New York State Athletic Commission to wrestle professionally, but no promoter hired him, perhaps because, with his red beard and his unkempt hair, he scared promoters, and perhaps because his limited English and his Rumanian intensity made them think he could not be counted on to remember which bouts to throw. On one occasion, he met Mr. Don King, the boxing promoter. "I said, 'Hello, Mr. Don King, I am Avram.' " Mr. Iusan said he promised then and there to make a world champion of any fighter Mr. Don King gave him to train. Mr. Don King gave him his card and said to come by his office the next day, but he wasn't there when Mr. Iusan arrived.



"Well, I'm a little bit sleepy now, so that concludes our broadcast day."

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Appearances count for a lot. They may lead you to believe that Mr. Iusan is a figure of fun, but nothing could be further from the truth. We have rarely enjoyed an hour spent with anyone as much as the hour we spent with Mr. Iusan and his lovely wife, Valeria. He is gracious, and hospitable to a fault, and as gentle as anyone we've ever met; he is a showman of the ancient, pre-image variety, convinced that the world will notice him because of his great talent. It would be to the credit of the world if it did. He began by giving us a look at a number of his clippings, trophies, and posters, among them a picture of him competing in the 1977 European Karate Championships, where, in a contest in which King Juan Carlos of Spain also competed, he set a world record by breaking thirty-two ceramic tiles with two simultaneous blows—one with each hand. Not long after that event, Mr. Iusan and his family defected from Rumania. "I have problem with the Communists," he said. "The Rumanians don't like to break. They don't like to break tiles. I'm the only one there. They don't like to break, because they're Communists. They say, 'A worker makes this tile for roof of the house. You break this. You destroy. You're bad!' I had a big, big, big, big problem with Communists." Mr. Iusan will happily show you several incriminating pictures of Rumania's President Nicolae Ceauşescu with Libya's strongman (in a different sense of the word) Muammar Qaddafi.

Visitors to Rumania who saw the show that Mr. Iusan performed (for tourists only) still sometimes come up to him on the street in New York. "I was on Four Two Street," he said. "A lady said, 'I saw you break chains.' " He grew up in the country town of Sighişoara, home of Dracula, which is twenty-five miles south of the city of Tîrgu-Mureş. "My grandfather was very strong. My father is very strong. My *mother* is very strong," he said, with a great laugh. "My father can carry a cattle on his back." After winning, at fourteen, a nationwide boxing title, he turned to the martial arts. "I have a— a different satisfaction with breaking," he said. "It is like a song in my head."

We asked him how he got to be so strong.

"It is a— *technique*," he said.

"What sort of technique?" we asked.

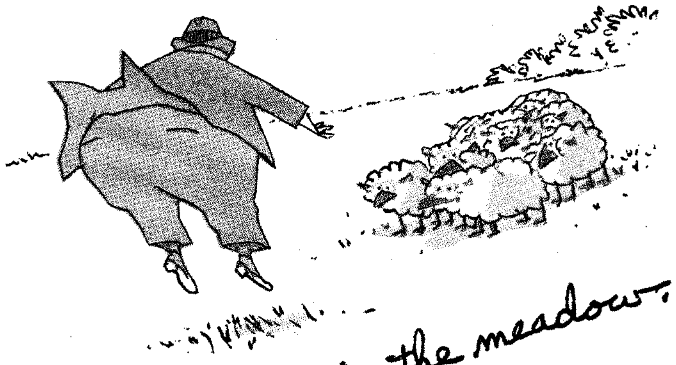
"A *training* technique," he said.

"But how does it work?" we persisted.

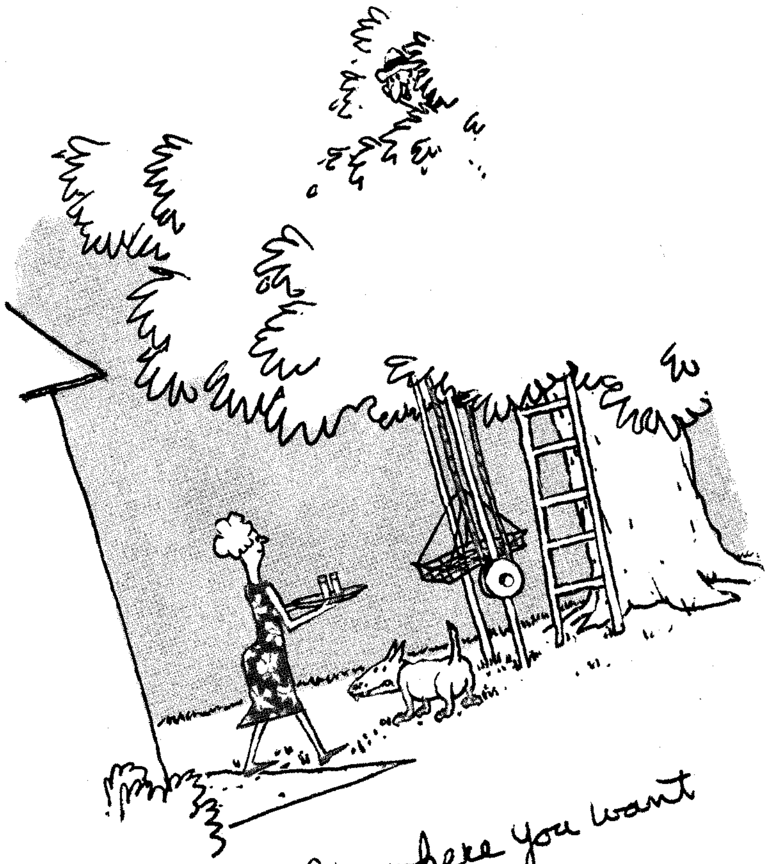
"It is"—and here he blushed, and looked down at his feet, and we were sorry we'd asked—"a secret. But in six months I train you, I guarantee you'll be me," he said.

Since coming to the United States, Mr. Iusan has had a varied career, winning martial-arts contests left and right but finding it hard to get into show business. He let us see a TV commercial he made for the Hardee's restaurant chain (it is a classic), and part of a movie, "The City Sharks," which didn't look very good. At the moment, he is trying to produce a film with a lady-Dracula story set in upstate New York, in which he will play a servant who is very strong and performs a number of feats. His son Avram, Jr., who is very nice, and quite slender, attends the John Jay College of Criminal Justice and hopes to become an attorney.

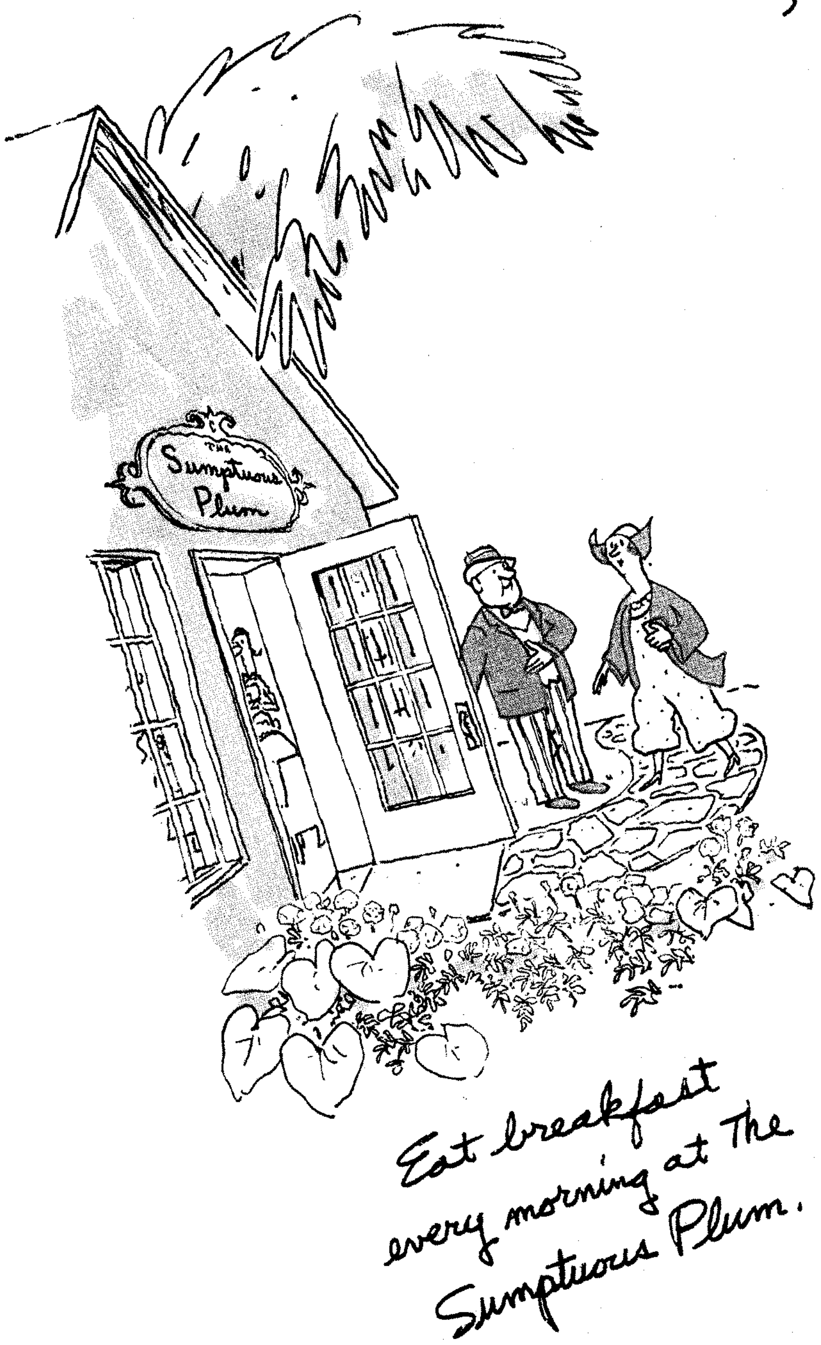
RETIREMENT BENEFITS



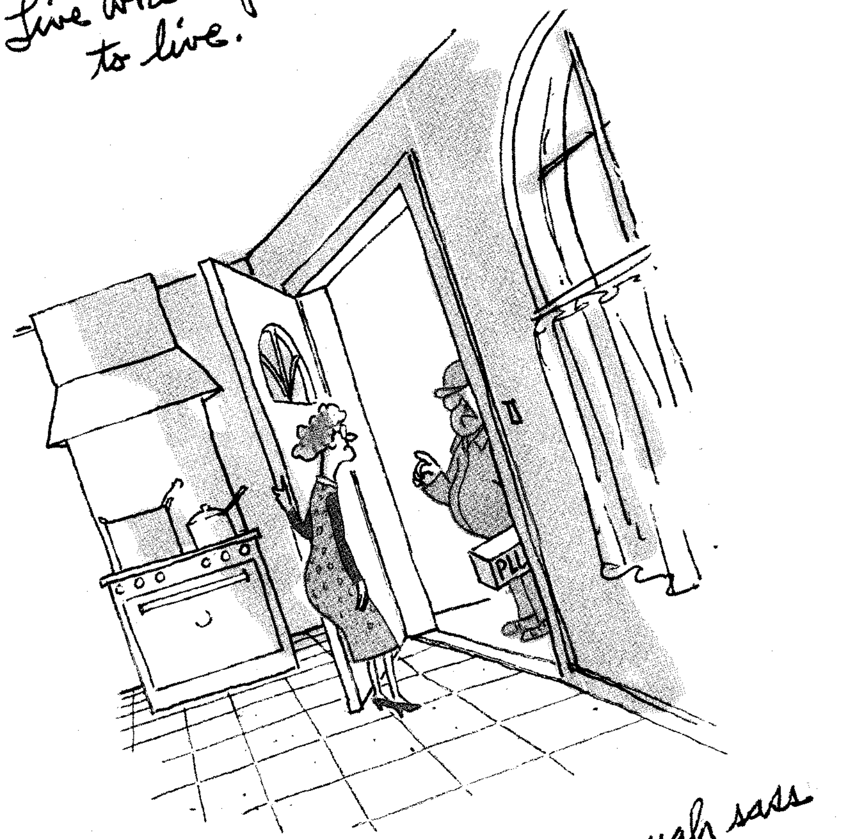
Gambol in the meadow.



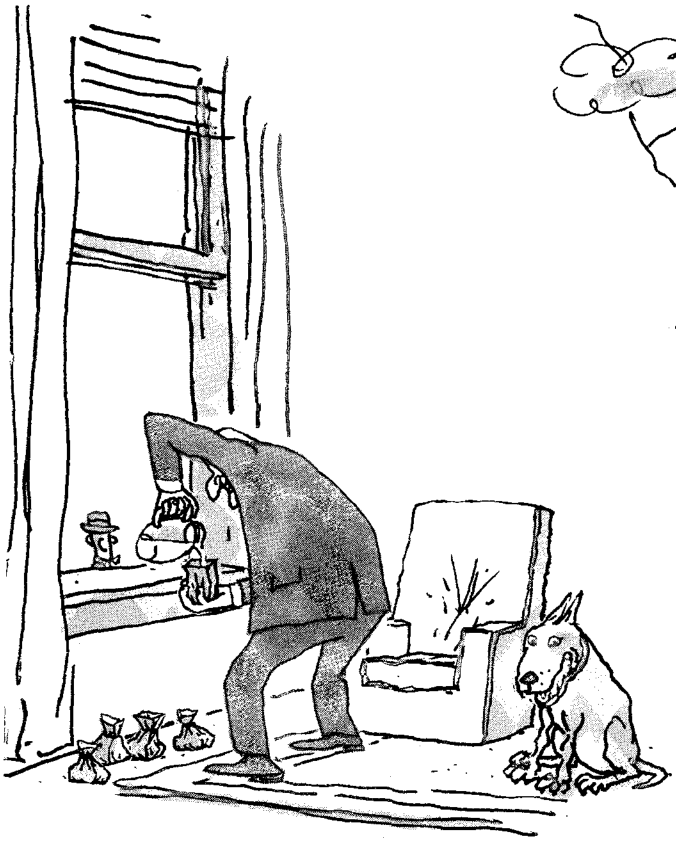
Live where you want to live.


The Sumptuous Plum

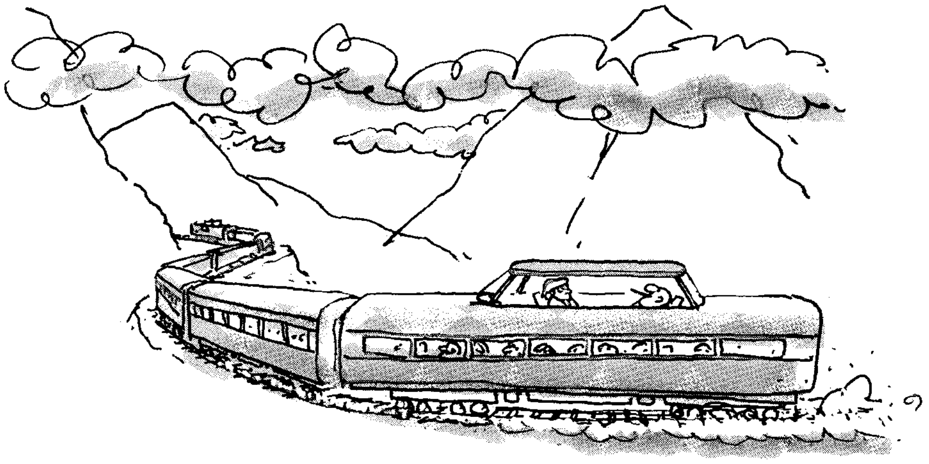
Eat breakfast every morning at The Sumptuous Plum.



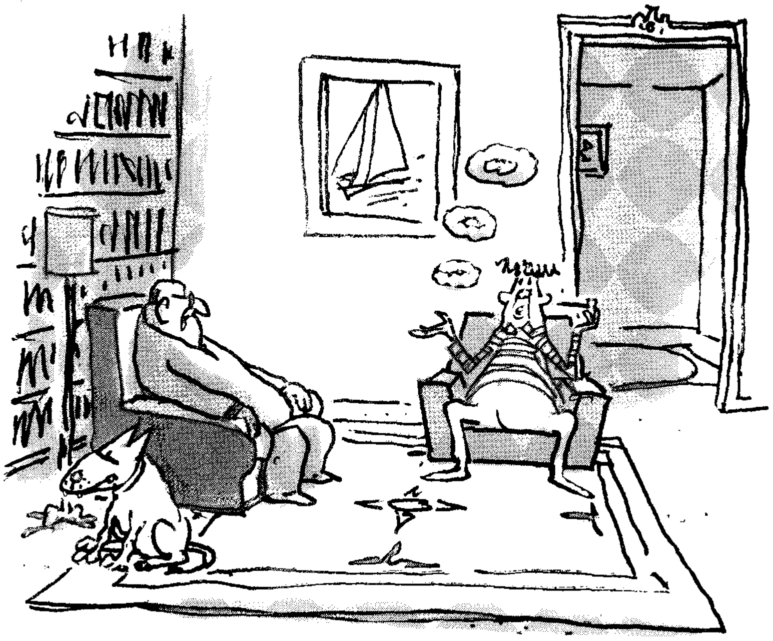
You have taken enough sass in your time. Do not take any more sass.



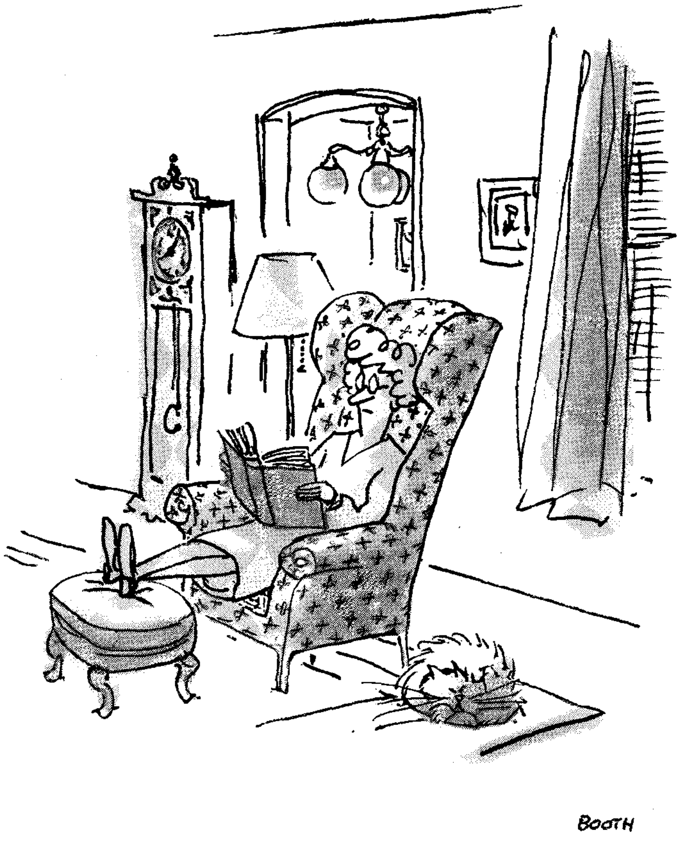
Remember, at this point in time you will be forgiven almost anything.



Instead of being there for your 43-year-old daughter and her husband, go to Alaska.



Take another look at your will.



"War and Peace," finally.

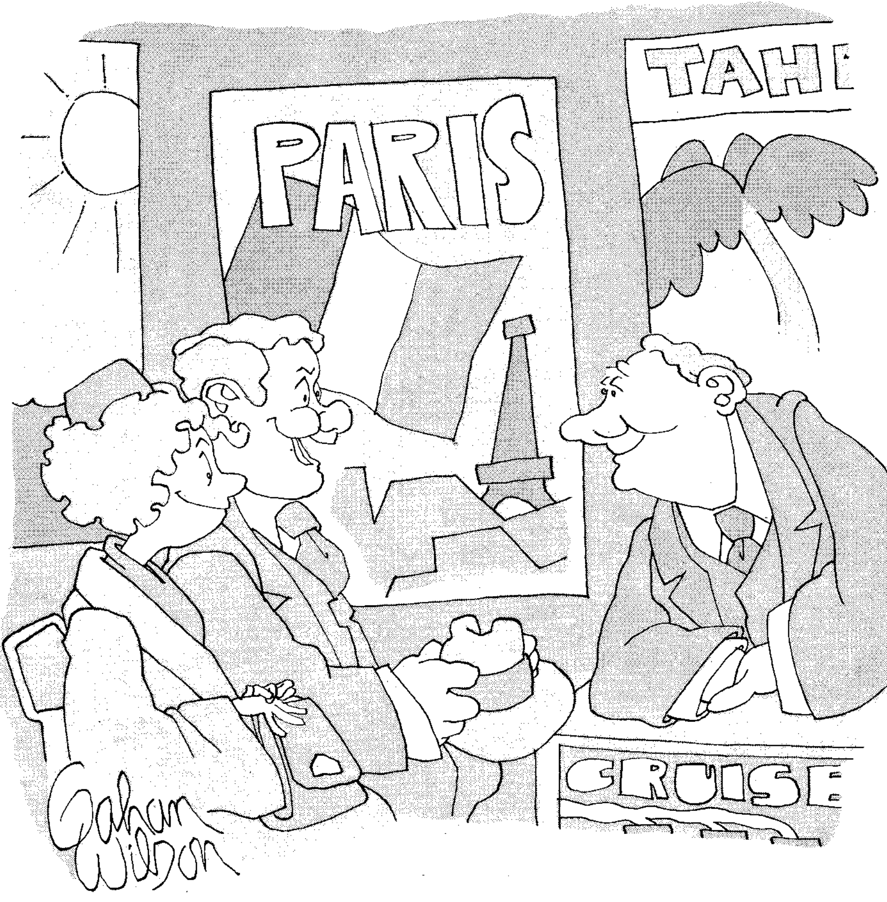
HOME TO MARIE

MY wife, Marie, has decided to give a party—a catered party—and invite old friends and also some new people and the neighbors on the left, the ones we speak to. Just before the caterer arrives there's a telephone call from Molly Vandergrift, to say that her daughter's temperature is a hundred and two, and that she and her husband won't be able to come, after all. I can see my wife's disappointment as she consoles Molly. And then, a few seconds after the call, Molly's husband's car peels out of the drive. My thought, when I hear a car streaking off, is always that a person is leaving home. My wife's explanation is more practical: he's going to get medicine.

My wife herself has left home two times in the three years we've been reconciled. Once she left in a rage, and another time she extended her visit to a friend's house in Wyoming from one week to six, and although she did not really say that she wasn't coming back, I couldn't get her to make a plane reservation, couldn't get her to say she missed me, let alone that she loved me. I've done wrong things. I've bought myself expensive new cars and passed off my old ones on her; I've lost money gambling; I've come home late for dinner a hundred times. But I never left my wife. She was the one who moved out the time we were going to get divorced. And after we reconciled she was the one who tore off in the car as a finale to a disagreement.

These things bubble up from time to time; some little thing will remind me of all the times she's left, or threatened to leave. Or she'll want something we can't afford and she'll look at me with what I call her stunned-rabbit eyes. For the most part, we try hard to be cheerful, though. She's been looking for work, I come straight home at the end of the day, and we've worked out the problem with the remote control for the TV: I give it to her for an hour, she gives it to me for an hour. We don't tend to watch more than two hours of TV a night.

Tonight there won't be any TV at all, because of the cocktail party. Right now, the caterer's car is double-parked in front of our house, and the caterer—a woman—is carrying things in, helped by a teen-age boy who is probably her son. He's as glum as she is cheerful. My wife and she give each other an embrace, all smiles. She darts in and out, carrying trays.



"Something light and fluffy."

My wife says, "I wonder if I should go out and help," and then answers by saying, "No—I hired her to do it." Then she's smiling to herself. "It's a shame the Vandergrifts can't come," she says. "We'll save something for them."

I ask if I should put some music on the stereo, but my wife says no, it'll be drowned out by the conversation. Either that or we'd have to crank it up so loud that it would bother the neighbors.

I stand in the front room and look at the caterer and the boy. He comes through the door holding one of the trays at arm's length, carefully, like a child with a sparkler that he's half afraid of. As I watch, Mrs. May, the neighbor we don't speak to (she called the police one night when we went to bed and mistakenly left the lights burning on the front porch), comes by with her toy poodles, Annaclair and Esther. She pretends not to notice that a caterer is carrying party food into our house. She can look right through you and make you feel like a ghost. Even the dogs have cultivated this look.

My wife asks me which person I'm most looking forward to seeing. She knows that I like Steve Newhall more than anybody else, because he's such a cutup, but just to surprise her I say, "Oh—it'll be nice to see the Ryans. Hear about their trip to Greece."

She snorts. "The day you care about travel," she says.

She's as responsible for fights as I am. She gets that edge to her voice. I try to keep a civil tongue in tone as well as in speech. She never minds giving one of those cynical little snorts and saying something cutting, though. This time, I decide to ignore it—just ignore it.

At first I can't figure out how come my wife and the caterer are so huggy-kissy, but as they talk I remember that my wife met the caterer at a shower in Alexandria a few months ago. The two of them are shaking their heads over some woman—not anyone I've met, so she must be a friend of my wife's from back when she had her job—and saying that they've never heard of a doctor who let labor go on for over sixty hours. I find out, as the foil is pulled back from the devilled eggs, that the woman is fine now, and that she had her tubes tied before she left the table.

The boy goes back to the car without saying goodbye. I stand in the hallway and look out the door. He gets in the car and slams the door shut. Behind him, the sun is setting. It's another one of those pink-to-orange sunsets that used to take my breath away. I move back from the door quickly, though, because I know the caterer is on her way out. Truth is, if I don't have to exchange amenities with her, all the better. I'm not good at thinking of things to say to people I don't know.

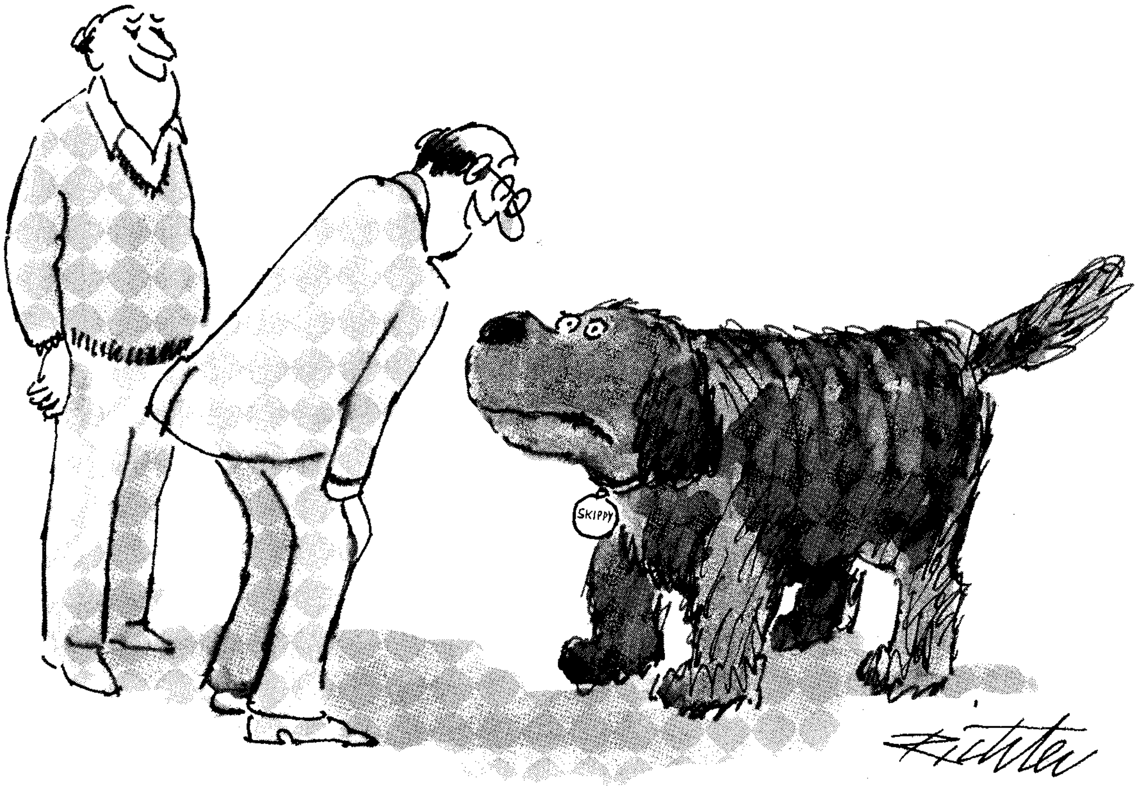
The caterer ducks her head into the room where I'm standing. She says, "You have a good party tonight. I think you're really going to like the fiery-hot bean dip." She smiles and—to my surprise—shrugs. The shrug seems to have no context.

My wife comes out of the kitchen, carrying a tray of sliced meat. I offer to carry platters with her, but she says she's fussy and she'd rather do it herself. That way, she'll know where she's placed everything. I wonder whether she couldn't just look at the table and see where she's put things, but when my wife is preparing for something it is not the time to ask questions. She'll snap and get in a bad mood. So I go out to the front porch and watch the sky darken.

The caterer honks as she pulls away, and for some reason—probably because he's sitting so straight—the boy reminds me of what happened when part of the highway into Washington was reserved for cars carrying at least three passengers: people around here started buying inflatable dolls and sitting them in the car. They put hats and coats on them.

"Mary Virushi and her husband are having a trial separation, but she's coming to the party with him anyway," my wife says from the doorway.

"Why'd you have to tell me that?" I say, turning away from the sunset and coming back into the house. "It'll just make me feel uncomfortable around them."



"So this is Skippy. You don't mind if I call you Skippy, do you?"

• •

"Oh, you'll survive," she says. She often uses this expression. She hands me a stack of paper plates and asks me to divide it in thirds and place the stacks along the front of the table. She asks me to get the napkins out of the cabinet and put piles of them down the middle of the table, between the vases of daisies.

"Nobody's supposed to know about the Virushis," she says, carrying out a tray of vegetables. Fanned out around the bowl in the middle, their colors—orange and red and white—remind me of the sky and the way it looked a few minutes ago.

"Also," she says, "please don't make it a point to rush to refill Oren's glass every time it's empty. He's making an effort to cut back."

"You do it," I say. "If you know everything, you do everything."

"You always get nervous when we entertain," she says. She brushes past me. When she comes back, she says, "The caterer really did a beautiful job. All I have to do is wash the platters and put them out on the porch tomorrow, and she'll take them away. Isn't that wonderful?" She kisses my shoulder. "Have to get dressed," she says. "Are you going to wear what you've got on?"

I have on white jeans and a blue knit shirt. I nod yes. Surprisingly, she doesn't argue. As she walks up the stairs, she says, "I can't imagine needing air-conditioning, but do what you think best."

I go back to the porch and stand there a minute. The sky is darkening. I can see a firefly or two. One of the little boys in the neighborhood passes by on his bike, all shiny blue, with training wheels on the back. There are streamers on the handlebars. The cat that kills birds walks by. I've been known to fill a water pistol and squirt the cat when nobody's looking. I've also turned the hose on it. It walks on the edge of our lawn. I know just what it's thinking.

I go in and take a look at the table. Upstairs, water is running in the shower. I wonder if Marie will wear one of her sundresses. She has a handsome back, and she looks lovely in the dresses. In spite of what she says, I do travel—and I often like it. Five years ago, we went to Bermuda. I bought the sundresses for her there. She never changes size.

On the table, there's enough food to feed an army. Half a watermelon has been hollowed out and filled with melon balls and strawberries. I have a strawberry. There are what look like cheese balls, rolled in nuts, and several bowls of dip, with vegetables around some and crackers in a bowl next to the others. I spear a piece of pineapple wrapped in prosciutto. I drop the toothpick in my pocket and push the pieces closer together, so the one I took won't be missed. Before the caterer came, my wife put out the liquor on the deep window ledge. There are candles with matches, ready to light. She might be wrong about the music—at least, it might be nice to have some music playing just as the first few people show up—but why argue? I agree that since there's a nice breeze we don't need air-conditioning.

In a little while, Marie comes down. She does not have on a sundress. She is wearing a blue linen dress I've never been fond of, and she is carrying a suitcase. She is not smiling. She looks, suddenly, quite drawn. Her hair is damp, and pulled back in a clip. I blink, not quite believing it.

"There isn't any party," she says. "I'd like you to see what it's like, to have food prepared—even though you didn't prepare it—and then just to wait. To wait and wait. Maybe this way you'll see what that's like."

As fast as I think *You're kidding!* I also know the answer. She isn't kidding. But the marriage counsellor—no marriage counsellor would agree that what she's doing is all right.

"You couldn't possibly be so childish," I say.

But she's out the door, going down the walk. Moths fly into the house. One flies across my mouth, tickling my skin. "What are you going to say about this to Dr. Ford?" I say.

She turns. "Why don't you ask Dr. Ford over for cocktails?" she says. "Or do you think the sight of real life might be too much for him?"

"Are you quitting?" I say. But I've lost heart. I'm out of steam, nearly out of breath. I say it so quietly I'm not sure that she heard. "Are you ignoring me?" I holler. When she doesn't answer, I know she is. She gets in the car, starts it, and drives away.

For a minute I'm so stunned that I sink down in one of the porch chairs and just stare. The street is unusually quiet. The cicadas have started to send up their sound. As I sit there, trying to calm myself, the boy on the bike pedals slowly up the hill. The neighbor's poodles start barking. I hear her shushing them. Then the barking subsides.

What was Marie thinking of? I can't remember the last time I was late for dinner. It was years ago. Years.

VAUCANSON

It was snowing as he wrote.
In the gray room he felt relaxed and singular.
But no one, of course, ever trusts these moods.

There had to be understanding to it.
Why, though? That always happens anyway,
And who gets the credit for it? Not what is understood,
Presumably, and it diminishes us
In our getting to know it

As trees come to know a storm
Until it passes and light falls anew,
Unevenly, on all the muttering kinship:
Things with things, persons with objects,
Ideas with people or ideas.

It hurts, this wanting to give a dimension
To life, when life is precisely that dimension.
We are creatures, therefore we walk and talk
And people come up to us, or listen
And then move away.

Music fills the spaces
Where figures are pulled to the edges,
And it can only say something.

Sinews are loosened then.
The mind begins to think good thoughts.
Ah, this sun must be good:
It's warming again,
Doing a number, completing its trilogy.
Life must be back there. You hid it
So no one would find it
And now you can't remember where.

But if one were to invent being a child again
It might just come close enough to being a living relic
To save this thing, save it from embarrassment
By ringing down the curtain,

And for a few seconds no one would notice.
The ending would seem perfect.
No feelings to dismay.
No tragic sleep to wake from in a fit
Of passionate guilt, only the warm sunlight
That slides easily down shoulders
To the soft, melting heart.

—JOHN ASHBERY

• •

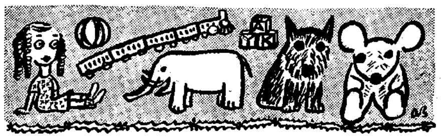
Katrina Duvall comes by. "Mitch?" she says, raising her hand over her brow and looking at the porch.

"Yes?" I say.

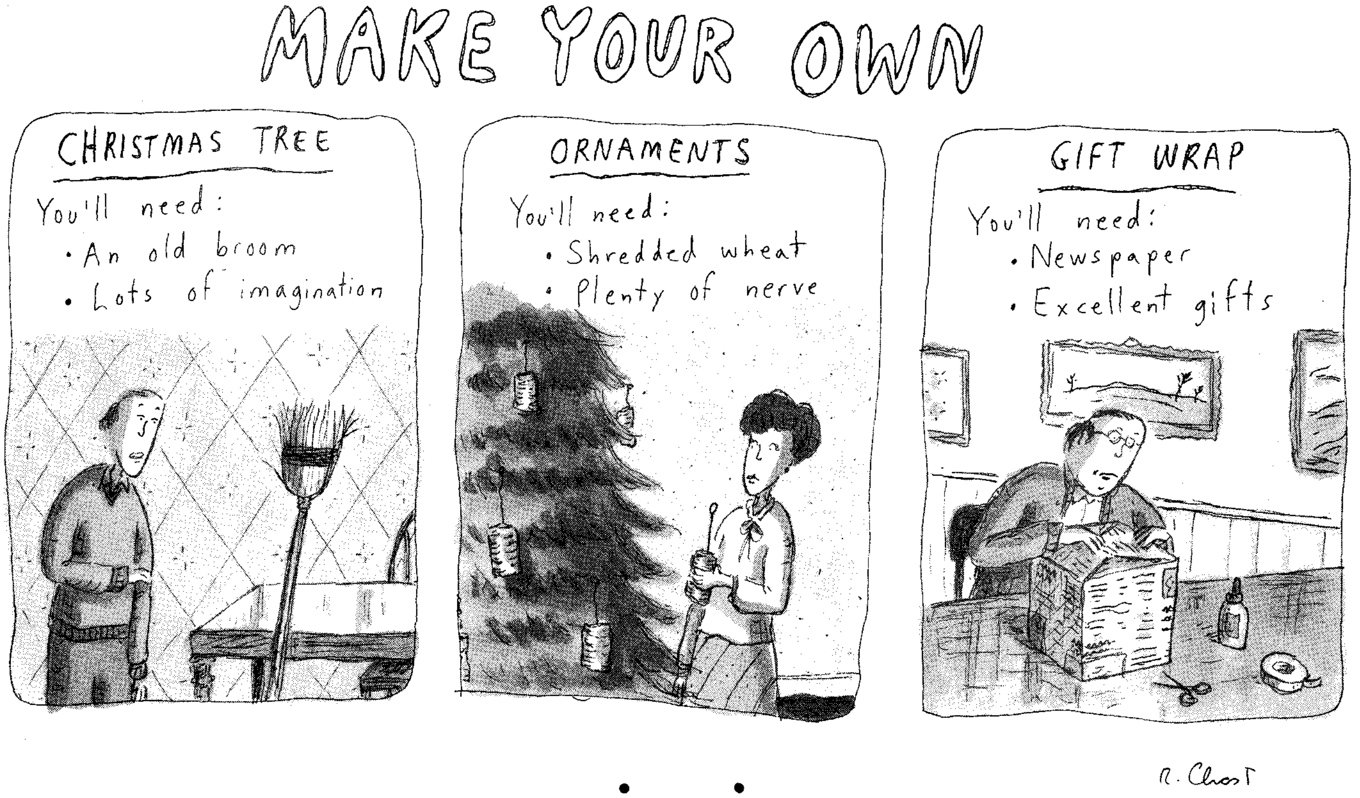
"Have you gotten your paper the last couple of Sundays?"

"Yes," I call back.

"We stopped it when we went to Ocean City, and we can't get it started again," she says. "I knew I should have just asked you to take it in, but you know Jack." Jack is her son, who is slightly retarded. She either does everything to please Jack or says that she does. The implication is that he is a tyrant. I know very little about him except that he slurs his words and once, during a snowstorm, he helped me dig out my driveway.



"All right, then," she calls, and walks away.



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In the distance, I hear rock and roll. There is loud laughter in the Vandergrifts' house. Who is having such a good time, if the child is sick? I squint hard at the house, but where it's dark I can't see anything, and where the windows are lit it's too bright to see in. A squeal, and more laughing. I get up and walk across the lawn. I knock on the door. Molly, breathless, answers.

"Hi," I say. "I know this is a silly question, but did my wife invite you for drinks tonight?"

"No," she says. She smooths her bangs off her forehead. Behind her, her daughter zooms by on a skateboard. "Take it easy!" Molly hollers. To me, she says, "They're coming to refinish the floors tomorrow. She's in heaven, being able to do that in the house."

"You didn't speak to Marie on the phone tonight?" I say.

"I haven't even seen her in a week. Is everything all right?" she says.

"It must have been somebody else she invited over," I say.

The little girl whizzes by again on the skateboard, doing wheelies.

"Jesus," Molly says, putting her hand over her mouth. "Michael went to Dulles to pick up his brother. You don't think Marie asked Michael and he forgot to tell me, do you?"

"No, no," I say. "I'm sure I'm mistaken."

Molly smiles her usual radiant smile, but I can tell I've made her nervous.

BACK in my house, I turn the light down a notch and stand at the front window, looking up at the sky. No stars tonight. Maybe in the country, but not here. I look at the candles and figure what the hell. I strike a match to light them. They're in ornate, heavy silver candlesticks—a hand-me-down from my aunt, who lives in Baltimore. As the candles burn, I look at the window and see the flames, and myself, reflected. The breeze makes the wax bead and drip, though, so I watch the candles burn only a few seconds more, then blow them out. They smoke, but I don't lick my fingers and pinch the wicks. After looking again at the empty street, I sit in a chair and look at the table.

I'll show her, I think. I'll be gone when she gets back.

Then I think about having a few drinks and some food.

But time passes, and I don't leave and I don't get a drink. I haven't touched the table when I hear a car coast to a stop. The blinking lights get my attention. An ambulance, I think —I don't know how, but somehow she hurt herself, and for some reason the ambulance is here, and . . .

I spring up.

The caterer is standing at the door. She is frowning. Her shoulders are a little hunched. She has on a denim skirt, a tube top, and running shoes. Behind me, the house is entirely quiet. I see her peer around me, toward the light in the front room. Her puzzlement is obvious.

"It was all a joke," I say. "My wife's joke."

She frowns.

"There isn't any party," I say. "My wife went away."

"You're kidding," the caterer says.

Now I am looking past her, at her car, with the lights blinking. The boy is not in the front seat. "What are you doing here?" I ask.

"Oh," she says, dropping her eyes. "I actually—I thought that you might need help, that I'd pitch in for a while."

I frown.

"I know that sounds funny," she says, "but I'm new in this business and I'm trying to make a good impression." She is still not looking at me. "I used to work in the bursar's office at the community college," she says, "and I hated that. So I figured that if I could get enough work as a caterer . . ."

"Well, come in," I say, standing aside.

For some time, bugs have been flying into the house.

"Oh, no," she says. "I'm sorry there's trouble. I just thought . . ."

"Come have a drink," I say. "Really. Come in and have a drink." She looks at her car. "Just a minute," she says. She goes down the walkway. She turns off the lights and locks the car. She comes back up the walk.

"My husband said I shouldn't butt in," she says. "He says that I try too hard to please and when you let people know you're eager you'll never get what you want."

"His philosophy aside," I say, "please come in and have a drink."

"I thought your wife seemed edgy," the caterer says. "I thought she was nervous about having such a big party. That she might be grateful for some help."

She hesitates, then steps in.

"Well," I say, throwing up my hands.

She laughs nervously. Then I laugh.

"Wine?" I say, pointing to the windowsill.

"That would be fine. Thank you," she says.

She sits, and I pour a glass of wine and carry it to her.

"Oh, I could have gotten that. What am I—"

"Sit still," I say. "I've got to be the host for somebody, right?"

I pour myself a bourbon and take a few ice cubes out of the ice bucket with my fingers and drop them in the glass.

"Do you want to talk about it?" the caterer says.

"I don't know what to say," I say. I move the ice around in my glass with one finger.

"I came here from Colorado," she says. "This place seems odd to me. Uptight, or something." She clears her throat. "Maybe it's not," she says. "I mean, obviously you never know—"

"What's really going on with other people," I say, finishing the sentence for her. "Case in point," I say, raising my glass.

"Will she come back?" the caterer asks.

"I don't know," I say. "We've quarrelled before, certainly."

I take a sip of bourbon. "Of course, this wasn't a quarrel. It was sort of a prank on her part, I guess you'd say."

"It is sort of funny," the caterer says. "She told you all those people were invited and—"

I nod, cutting her off.

"Funny if it's not you, I mean," she says.

I take another sip of my drink. I look at the caterer. She is a thin young woman. It doesn't seem she could have any particular interest in food herself. She is actually quite pretty, in a plain way.

We sit in silence for a while. I can hear squeals from next door, and am sure she hears them, too. From where I sit, I can see out the window. The lightning bugs make brief pinpoints of light. From where she sits, the caterer can only see me. She looks at me, at her drink, and back at me.

"I don't mean that this should matter very much to you," she says, "but I think it's good for me to see that things aren't necessarily what they seem. I mean, maybe this town is an O.K. place to be. I mean, as complicated as any other town. Maybe I just have it unfairly stereotyped." She takes another drink. "I didn't really want to leave Colorado," she says. "I was a ski instructor there. The man I live with—he's not really my husband—he and I were going to start a restaurant here, but it fell through. He's got a lot of friends in this area, and his son, so here we are. His son lives here with his mother—my friend's ex. I hardly know anybody."

I get the bottle and pour her another glass of wine. I take a last sip of my drink, rattle the ice cubes, and fill my own glass with wine. I put the bottle on the floor.

"I'm sorry I stumbled in on this. My being here must embarrass you," she says.

"Not true," I say, half meaning it. "I'm glad to see somebody."

She turns and looks over her shoulder. "Do you think your wife is going to come back?" she says.

"Can't say," I say.

She nods. "It's funny to be in a situation where you know something about somebody and they don't know anything about you, isn't it?"

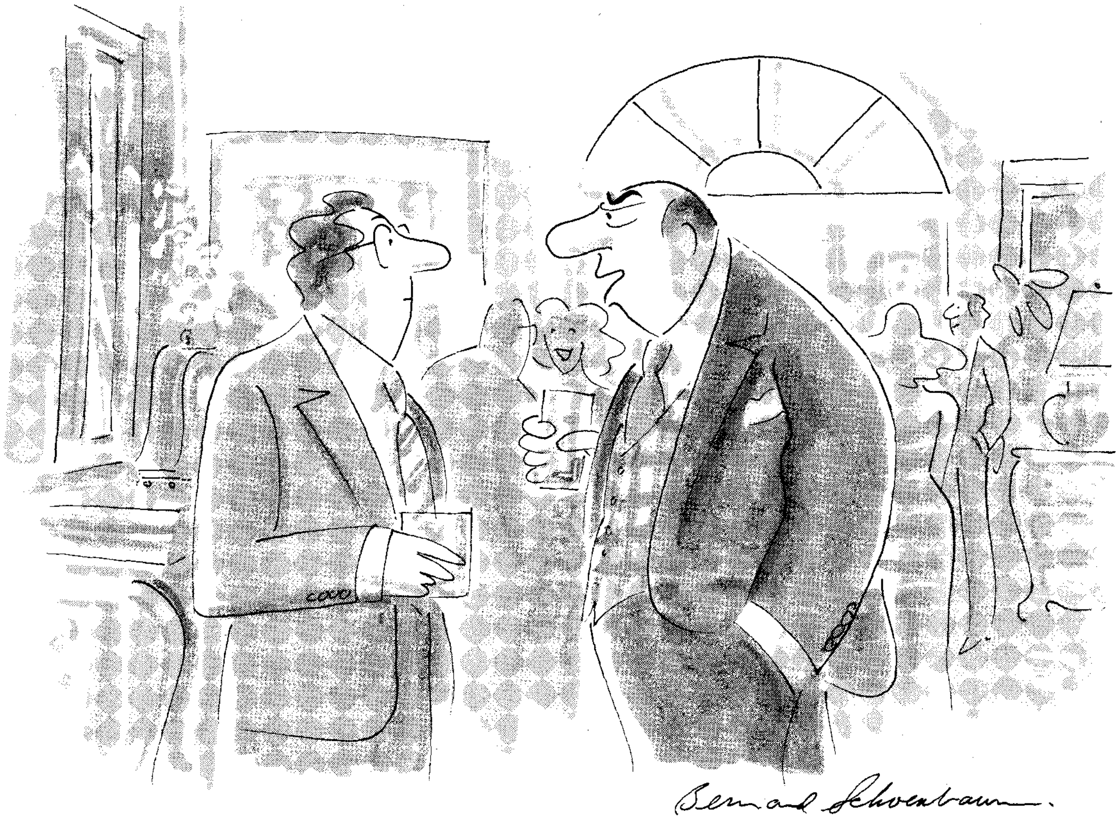
"What do you mean? You just told me about Colorado, and the restaurant you were going to open."

"Yeah," she says, "but that's nothing personal. You know what I mean."

"Then go ahead and tell me something personal."

She blushes. "Oh, I didn't mean that."

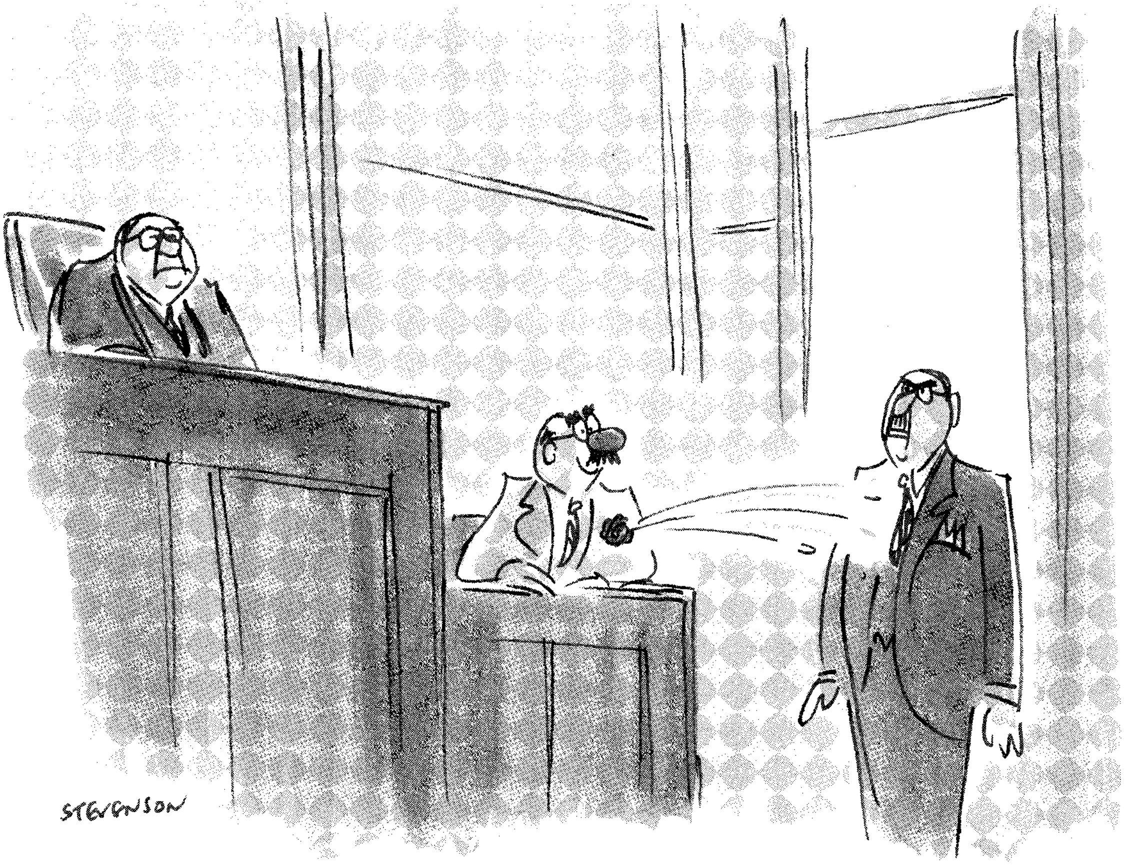
"Why not?" I say. "This is a strange enough night already, isn't it? What if you tell me something personal?"



"I shall now punch a huge hole in your argument."

She gnaws at her cuticle. She might be younger than I thought. She has long, shiny hair. I try to picture her in a nylon jacket, on a ski slope. That makes the night seem hotter suddenly. It makes me realize that in a few months, though, we will be wearing down-filled jackets. Last November there was a big snow.

"The guy I live with is an illustrator," she says. "You've probably seen some of his stuff. He doesn't need money, he just wants to have it all. To draw. To have a restaurant. He's grabby. He usually figures it out to have what he wants, though." She takes a drink. "I feel funny saying this," she says. "I don't know why I started to tell you about us." Then she stops talking, smiling apologetically.



"Your Honor, the witness, in my opinion, has failed to establish credibility."

• •

Instead of coaxing her, I get up and put some things on two plates, put one on a table by my chair, and hand the other plate to her. I pour her another glass of wine.

"He has a studio next to the ceramics factory," she says. "That big building with the black shutters. In the afternoon he calls me, and I take over a picnic basket and we eat lunch and make love."

I break a cracker in half with my thumb and first finger and eat it.

"That's not it, though," she says. "The thing is, it's always something like Wonder bread. It's real kinky. I trim off the crust and make bologna sandwiches with a lot of mayonnaise. Or I'll make Cheese Whiz sandwiches with Ritz crackers, or peanut-butter-and-marshmallow sandwiches. And we drink Kool-Aid or root beer or something like that. One time I cooked hot dogs and sliced them to go on crackers and squirted cheese around the circles. We had that and Dr Pepper. The thing is, the lunch has to be really disgusting."

"I got that," I say. "I guess I got it."

"Oh," she says, dropping her eyes. "I mean, I guess it's obvious. Of course you figured it out."

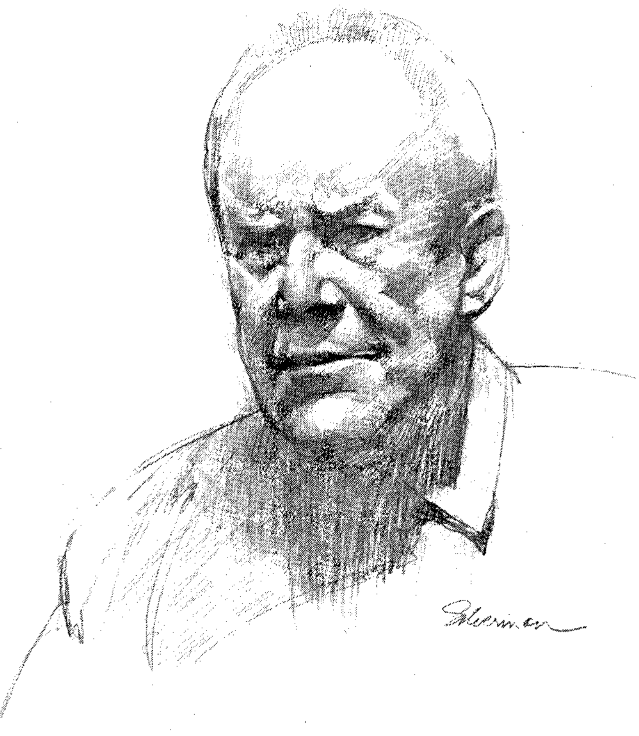
I wait to see if she's going to ask me to reveal something. But instead she gets up and pours the last of the wine into her glass and stands with her back to me, looking out the window.

I know that ceramics factory. It's not in a good part of town. There's a bar just down the street from it, and one night when I was coming out of the bar a kid jumped me. I remember how fast he came at me on his bike, and the screech of tires, as if the bike were a big car. Then he was all over me, half punching and half squeezing, as if my wallet would pop out of hiding like a clown's head spinning out of a jack-in-the-box. "It's in my back pocket," I said, and when I said that he jammed his hand into the pocket and then slugged me in the side, hard. "Stay down!" he said in sort of a whisper, and I lay there, curled on my side, putting my hand over my face so that if he thought about it later he wouldn't come back and make more trouble because I'd gotten a good look at him. My nose was bleeding. I only had about twenty bucks in my wallet, and I'd left my credit cards at home. Finally I got up and tried to walk. There was a light on in the ceramics factory, but I could tell from the stillness that nobody was there—it was just a light that had been left on. I put my hand on the building and tried to stand up straighter. There was a point when a terrible pain shot through me—such a sharp pain that I went down again. I took a few breaths, and it passed. Through the big glass window I saw ceramic shepherds and animals—figures that would be placed in crèches. They were unpainted—they hadn't been fired yet—and because they were all white and just about the same size the donkeys and the Wise Men looked a lot alike. It was a week or so before Christmas, and I thought, Why aren't they finished? They're playing it too close; if they don't get at it and start painting, it's going to be too late. "Marie, Marie," I whispered, knowing I was in trouble. Then I walked as well as I could, got to my car, and went home to my wife.

—ANN BEATTIE

PROFILES

CONVERSATIONS WITH KIRSTEIN—I



IN 1979, I renewed a long-standing proposal to my friend Lincoln Kirstein, the general director of New York City Ballet and president of the School of American Ballet, to record an oral history of his involvement with the arts. He demurred, as he had before—perhaps partly because he may have had plans to revive a projected autobiographical work, "Memoirs of a Sly Fellow." In the fall of 1983, however, two weeks after reading in this magazine the edited transcript of conversations I had had with his longtime associate George Balanchine (who had recently died), Kirstein said he would be willing to engage in a similar exchange, provided that, as he put it, "we don't talk only about George or only about ballet."

This proviso was understandable, for, as commanding as Kirstein's position is in the field of dance—rivalled in modern times only by that of Sergei Diaghilev—dance has been merely the most conspicuous element of his long and varied career. "Lincoln Kirstein: The Published Writings, A First Bibliography," published in 1978 by the Yale University Library, listed four hundred and seventy-three titles, including fiction, poetry, drama and ballet librettos, and books and articles covering—in addition to dance—drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, photography, film, music, and literature.

Lincoln Kirstein was born in 1907 in Rochester, New York, and grew up in Boston. He graduated from Harvard in 1930, and shortly thereafter moved to New York. I first met him in 1957, when, as director of the Ford Foundation's program in humanities and the arts, I was involved with many American ballet companies and schools. Twenty-four years earlier, Kirstein had brought George Balanchine from Europe to help him found the School of American Ballet, and soon afterward the two men started American Ballet (1935-38) and Ballet Caravan (1936-40). Their third company, New York City Ballet, was launched in 1948, with Kirstein as general director and Balanchine as ballet master.

Between 1957 and 1980, I talked with Lincoln Kirstein about the arts perhaps once a week. None of these conversations were recorded—save a few, in outline form, on the subjects of national scholarship programs in ballet and grants by the Ford Foundation to the School of American Ballet and New York City Ballet. The edited transcript that follows comes from seven conversations I had with him at his home in Manhattan between November, 1983, and June, 1984, during the difficult transition period for both the school and the company following Balanchine's death.

Compared to the person whose ideas I had regularly encountered over a twenty-five-year period, Lincoln Kirstein in 1983 was less polemical and much more even-tempered in his dealings with his associates. But he was also much more withdrawn. At the same time, what made these conversations possible, even with a longtime friend, was some apparently newly discovered ability, and willingness, to transcend the self, to speak more simply than had ever been his habit; to cling not to individuality—of which he had been a supreme exemplar—but to order.

LOWRY: From 1933 on, you regularly made it clear that your role was to give possibilities and choices, within whatever limits were necessary, to Balanchine's leadership, professionally and artistically, even though you had many different roles in the various productions that came along. Yet there must sometimes have been contests of will between you and Balanchine; there certainly were between you and Balanchine's manager, Vladimir Dimitriew.

KIRSTEIN: I never had any disagreements with George on any serious point. We never had a contract; we never had any kind of legal connection. We never had any disagreements because we never talked about anything. We really had very little connection with each other. Whatever he did he did by himself. Every so often, I could suggest something, simply because he really had no interest in how things looked. Generally speaking, he knew what he wanted, but for specifics he needed suggestions, so I could give them to him. But we never quarrelled.

LOWRY: You were there at most rehearsals, you were there frequently with Balanchine and Stravinsky, you were there with the dancers, and so on, and I think that at times you may even have been used by the dancers as a different kind of sounding board from George.

KIRSTEIN: I doubt it, because the dancers he was interested in were always girls, and I had hardly any contact with the girls. My role with the dancers, as far as I could figure it out, was with the men. After Lew Christensen left the company [in 1951], there were hardly any men. And the boys I liked particularly George usually agreed about. The first dancers that I felt were possibly going to do something, he would also agree, because it was obvious. But I don't think the dancers ever considered me anything at all. I'm sure the girls didn't.

LOWRY: Well, I don't know. When I first came close to them, in the late fifties, early sixties, there was certainly a consciousness of your presence and your authority.

Kirstein: Well, I was always around. But if there was ever any trouble about casting, if they had any trouble about specific things, I couldn't have done anything about it if I had wanted to. People don't realize the specific way in which George ran the company. There wasn't anything else. There was nothing except what he wished, and that's why it's very difficult now—because there isn't that kind of single purpose or tyrannical behavior. It's much harder to run a company now, without him, than it was with him. It was hard enough to run it *with* him, that's true, but that was for other reasons.

Lowry: In my experience, it is quite unusual, and not in the normal run of the cards, that Balanchine would have had a partner who could with dignity and force give such a mandate and be so completely supportive of his "tyrannical behavior," to use your phrase.

Kirstein: Well, you see, I've always had the idea—particularly after my Army experience—that we were conducting a military operation. It always seemed to me to be in a state of emergency one way or another. The big festivals—the Stravinsky Festivals, the Tchaikovsky Festivals—were extraordinary operations to plan and to execute. People don't realize what was involved. It was fantastic behavior. And this was true of the team that George got around him. It wasn't only George; it was also the technical crew and the effect that he had on stagehands and on the dancers. There was *no* opposition. When you read about the horror of Broadway productions, and the waste, and all the rest of it—there was none of that with us. It was rather easy, because he *made* it easy. He always assumed that it was easy. He had the people he wanted, and the team that he got—he wasn't ever very vocal about it, but they enabled him to do what he needed. He was in exactly the same situation as the commanding officer of an engagement. And he had all the hazards; the only thing that was not involved was, fortunately, the loss of life.

Lowry: There has always been the feeling among those who have observed your career that there had to be both an aristocratic quality and a great dignity in your being able to leave such control and authority to George Balanchine. It was a gift to Balanchine. O.K., his talent and abilities and insight—well, his genius—warranted it all, but it nevertheless is very hard for a partner, an entrepreneur, a general director to give. I'm not consciously trying to make encomia or tributes to you, but I think sometimes you are not only indifferent to but really oblivious of these impressions about you.

Kirstein: Well, maybe it's rather insulting to others on my part, because I don't count on them.

Lowry: Does it concern you in any way at all, on the one hand, or does it give you some release, on the other, that you are now in a somewhat different position, in that all power and control as general director are in your hands?

Kirstein: I never believed it was, and it's not now.

Lowry: But with whom is it shared?

Kirstein: It's shared with the people I work with.

Lowry: Yes, but . . .

Kirstein: I never had any ultimate power with George at all. We were barely friends. He hardly ever came here; I hardly ever saw him except at the theatre. We hardly ever talked.

Lowry: I understand that, and that's something, of course, I want to touch on. But you were also the force that made it possible for George to *be* that way.

Kirstein: That's something else again. But as far as any pleasure I have in being the head of something or other goes, I have none. I have absolutely none. I don't like it, I never

"I already have her main present. I'm looking for a backup present, just in case."

have liked it, and I'd like to get rid of it right now if that weren't irresponsible on my part. It's something that no longer interests me, and it hasn't interested me in a long time. Particularly since George's death, I don't give a damn essentially, except that I feel I have to help Peter [Martins, the ballet-master-in-chief of N.Y.C.B.] as much as I can. But as for getting any pleasure out of it, I get none.

Lowry: Are you telling me that's not a change, it's just an extension?

Kirstein: It's not a change. When the thing became an institution, I lost interest in it. By then, your interest is a habit, and it has no real vitality.

Lowry: You just put your finger on something that is trammelling a great many people in the arts. Is it possible that things like energy and creativity and focus can't survive being institutionalized for very long periods?

Kirstein: The kind of thing that we did, the strength of it was based on improvisation. When it got to be as big as it is now, there are so many factors that limit the improvisation. George knew it; he said, "*Après moi, le Board.*"

Lowry: I didn't think he knew he had a board.

Kirstein: He knew he had it. He did pretty well with it, too.

Lowry: Laymen who have no concept of ballet or of what you are doing have an idea of Lincoln Kirstein as a figure in his generation—important, interesting, different, distinctive.

Kirstein: Well, I never felt that way. I remember once asking Wystan Auden if he had any feeling about his renown or his fame or the fact that he was probably the best-known, most quoted poet of his generation, and he said, "Sometimes falling asleep at night it feels warm."

Lowry: In your most active daily experience, how much do you feel you are in control of events?

Kirstein: Well, it all depends on the event. I've tried to routinize my life to such a degree that there's very little accident. It's extremely orderly. I have a rule of thumb about negative occurrences—that they come up evenly—and so I always expect the reverse of something or other. As far as having control is concerned, I am a kind of steward for a mechanism that does control certain things, but I never think I'm any more than that. And there are large pressures that don't necessarily correspond to the kind of energy I can give at a certain time. There are many times when I've been perfectly impotent.

Lowry: Does the attempt to routinize and to bring order and to be the steward of something that is orderly—does this have a certain beauty of its own, this orderliness, as in the School of American Ballet?

Kirstein: I like to see the kids dance, if that's what you mean.

Lowry: No. You like to see them discover themselves also, don't you?

Kirstein: They *don't* discover themselves; I mean, they hardly ever do.

Lowry: Then the faculty discovers them, or George discovered them.

Kirstein: Well, they developed one way or another. You can't judge very much on what you see in the school. It only comes out in the company.

Lowry: Right. Do you remember what you wrote about Eugenie Ouroussow in "Thirty Years/The New York City Ballet"? You were talking about how unlikely it was that this woman, three generations away from her ancestry, who came in as a secretary to Dimitriew, and so on, should become such an efficient, controlled administrator of the school, with her own force and her own authority. I'm not quoting exactly, I know, but something like that. Maybe there's something about a training school of this sort, modelled on the experience of the White Russians, that is attractive in its orderliness—a kind

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HOWARD HUGHES LEAVES MANAGUA: PEACETIME, 1972

The car is comfortable,
but people swarm in the headlights,
carrying kettles and babies. It's his birthday.
Sometimes the road shakes. Buildings drop
to rubble, and dust
dulls the hood of the Mercedes. Which
birthday? He tries to count. The dead lie
beside the road, looking surprised. He sings
a phrase, forgets to sing, curls
against cool leather. The car follows
whichever roads aren't blocked
with debris. This must be someone else's
movie. He takes another Valium.

Among the buildings flames stand up,
and then gray light connects them. He sees
small fires fall into line: an airfield.
When he leaves the car, heat
and Spanish assault him,
and smoke, and people coughing. He knows
the set: "Hell's Angels," his crews running
and stunt pilots carried away
on covered stretchers. He walks slowly,
but no one recognizes him. Which
birthday? He will ask.

Nothing is more elegant than the empty white jet
touching down. It will bring him codeine
and the sky, which is never busy.
He will ask someone how old he is,
and the answer will come quietly
on a piece of paper. People die
in movies. He will sleep
and wake up in a different country.

—Pamela Alexander

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of institution never completely boring or empty.

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KIRSTEIN: As you know, I've always tried to think of the school as a kind of West Point of the dance, and when I was in the Army I was on detached service in West Point for some time. I saw what was required. And what was required was not making gentlemen but making engineer officers. And while there were a great many amenities that could have been included, it was a certain sort of efficiency. They were not making well-rounded men; they were making engineer officers. And I felt the same way about the school. The school makes professional dancers. It does not turn out well-rounded humanists, and whether one thinks this is a perversion or a deformation, that's the choice of the people who are interested or magnetized by this particular kind of thing. And it has a kind of elegance, because it's very lean, it's stoic, and it's laconic, and it's cloistered. And that naturally has a certain sort of beauty. But whether or not it has any sort of perfection, in an aesthetic sense, I simply don't know. I don't feel that it has, particularly. I feel that the kids in the school are in one sense condemned by what they want to do. On the other hand, they have a definite situation and a definite magnet, and they're not like the majority of college students, who have a very vague idea of what they want to do, except to make enough money to get married and have children, in a vague way, or only to make a lot of money. There's nothing aimless about the School of American Ballet. It's all very, very much directed, and if, as some people believe, Balanchine was a tyrant and deformed these children and forced them into anorexia and suicide that's something else again.

LOWRY: You said the young people can't be judged till they get in the company, but this kind of school can have almost the same sense of immediacy, beauty, role, function, authority that a company can have, can it not?

KIRSTEIN: Well, yes.

LOWRY: You and George Balanchine created really two companies, two families, two things, and yet they were complementary.

KIRSTEIN: Well, you see, a lot of the kids in the school don't choose to come to it; their choice is directed by their parents. And since the school has been rather famous for its discipline, parents put some children there to keep them off the streets and to give them a kind of discipline they can't get anywhere else. It's like putting them in a seminary, in a sense, and if this is the only reason they are there they don't stay very long.

LOWRY: O.K., I want to read two quotes, both by you—one in a book and one in a memorandum you showed me that you wrote to Nigel Redden [director of the National Endowment for the Arts Dance Program]. The one in the book is from 1952. It says, "In liberal democracy and anxious anarchy, the traditional classic dance, compact of aristocratic authority and absolute freedom in a necessity of order, has never been so promising as an independent expression as it is today." That was from "The Classic Ballet." Now, today you have said in the memo to Redden, "It is easier to imagine that anyone can move to rhythm, to dance more interestingly than it is for everyone to master a keyboard, strings or the embouchure of a wind instrument. It is true that any healthy person can 'dance' for recreation or fun, but the spectacular value of the movement depends on the extremity of trained muscle, tendons, and mentation."

The point of view is the same, and equally steadfast in principle. But the tone is a little different. The 1983 statement is more concrete, evidential, circumstantial. Can you use this shift in emphasis to talk a bit about the changing scene in modern, or interpretative, dance and the continuing struggle to legitimize it?

KIRSTEIN: The great difference is the legitimization of ballet and the disintegration of the so-called modern dance in the followers of its first generation, and the fact that the so-called post-postmodernists are all embracing ballet. The last big piece of Twyla Tharp, in Washington ["Bach Partita," performed in December, 1983, by American Ballet Theatre], for example, is danced by a ballet company and could not be danced by a modern group.

LOWRY: And yet Twyla Tharp will not go on primarily as a classical-ballet choreographer.

KIRSTEIN: She's not a classical-ballet choreographer, but the classical ballet has always admitted bastard variations, mutations, conversions, per-

WATCH YOUR HAT & COAT

versions since it started. It could accommodate all of it, just as medicine has from the time of Galen adopted varieties of philosophy based on data.

LOWRY: Do you see more signs that modern dance is in a descending phase, with a very small audience going to each one of the manifestations and not being very much enlarged by it? Do you see these choreographers more on the defensive even than they were?

KIRSTEIN: They reduced themselves to what they call minimal choreography. It's the least they can do. They now walk and they run a little bit. And what you are supposed to do is to concentrate enough to notice the nuance between very slight variants in measure. There is nothing to look at.

LOWRY: Somewhere in this memorandum you wrote to Redden, you talked about Martha Graham and what came after, saying that she was in one sense, dramatically, easy to follow.

KIRSTEIN: She had no opposition.

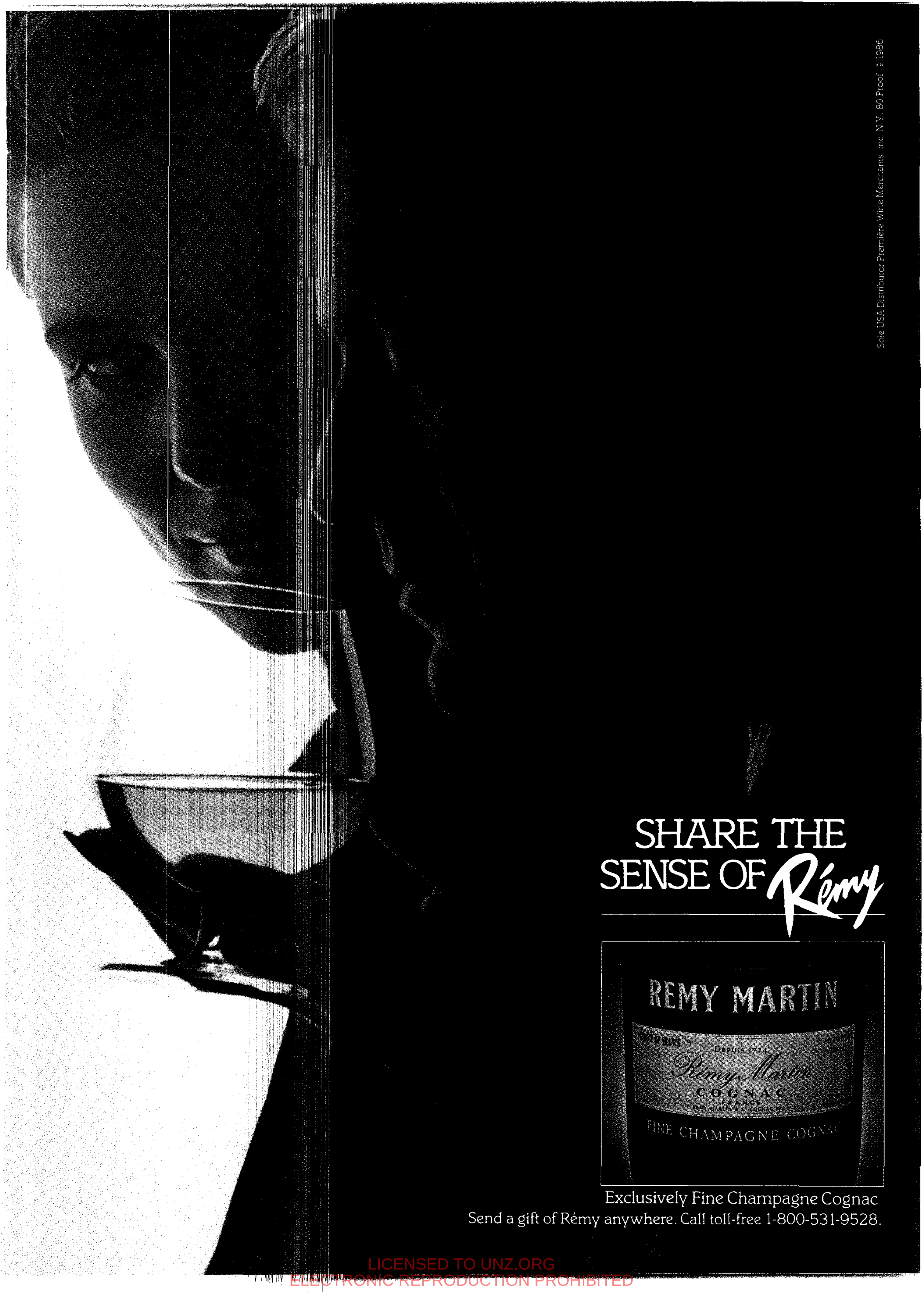
LOWRY: Well, she also showed—I think you used the word "passion." And, of course, this has a dramatic flexibility.

KIRSTEIN: She was chronologically in luck. She corresponded to necessity. She filled the vacuum. There was nothing really and truly to oppose her. And she had a very strong personality and a lot of energy, and it was comparatively easy for her to impose herself.

LOWRY: And, unwittingly or wittingly, Isadora Duncan and Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn had all made it possible for Martha? Or for that phase?

KIRSTEIN: Well, Martha—give the devil her due—she was much more intelligent than they were, and in a sense she was better read and better educated. And since St. Denis had predigested for her all the exotic business, Martha was free of it. I mean, Ruth St. Denis corresponded to a kind of artistic imperialism. She went to the Orient, she absorbed the Orient; she went to Mexico, she absorbed Mexico. And she brought back a kind of stylistic veneer of all these things which was in lieu of a repertory. She was never much of a dancer. She never made much of a repertory, but she was a good personality, and with Shawn she seemed to typify an appetite for all sorts of dances, and Martha could go on with her own thing. Martha was also, in a certain sense—although she had no direct contact with it—legitimized by the Expressionist effort in Germany through Mary Wigman. After the First World War, Mary Wigman, in the succession of Rudolf von Laban, had a big Oriental period, and she gathered together in Munich a big school and made a vocabulary out of improvisation. And a certain number of Americans went there, and then Hanya Holm came here. Bennington adopted Hanya Holm and Doris Humphrey and Martha; and Bennington really gave the legitimization to modern dance and also to its alumni, who continued to support it. But there was never any interest in training children, and there was never any virtuosic possibility for them, and consequently their province was the floor, and the ballet's province was the air.

LOWRY: How could it not have oc-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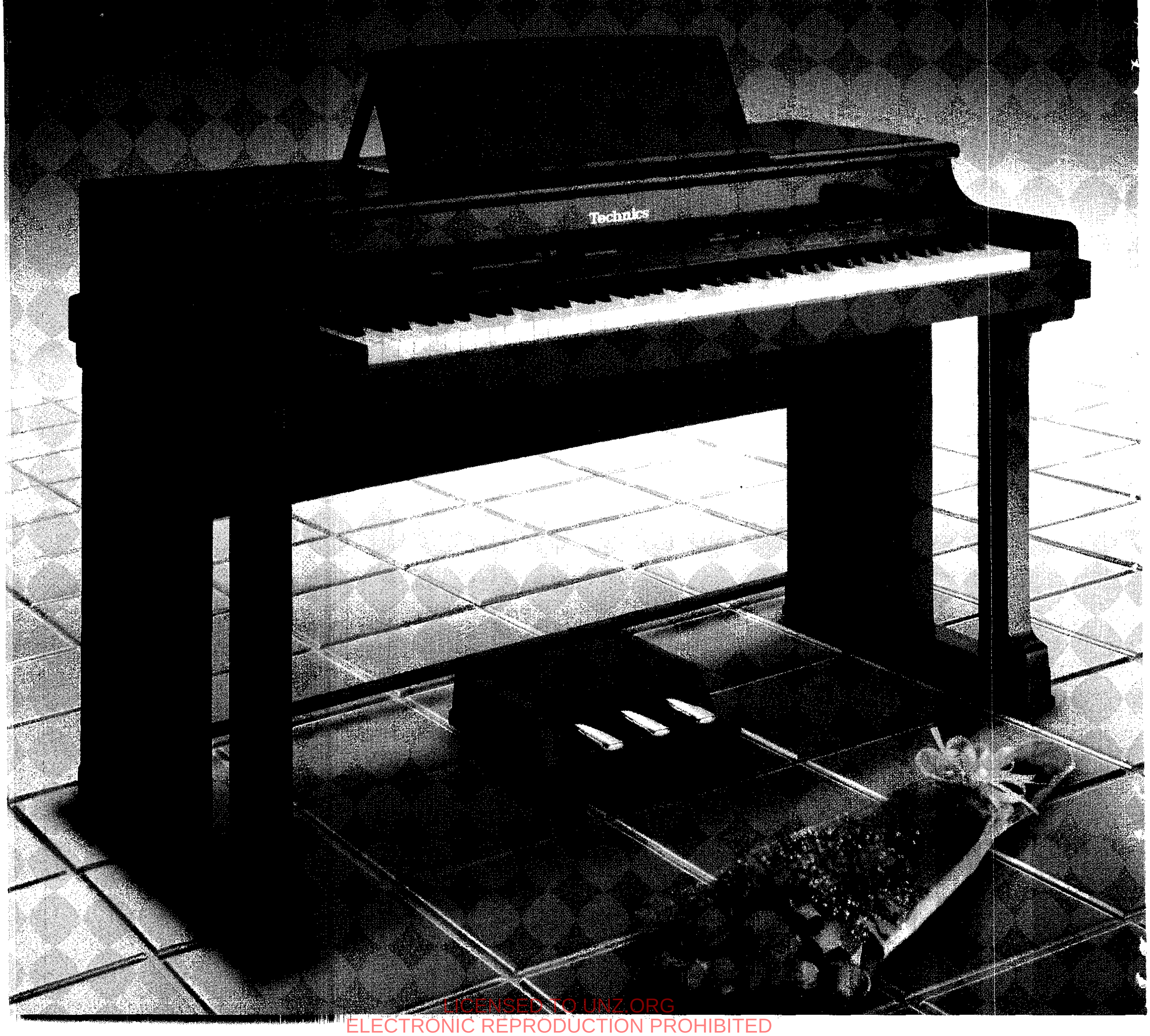


curred, do you think, to some of those people in the years you are now talking about—the Bennington era and later—that if they didn't find any system for training children they weren't going to build anything?

KIRSTEIN: They had no interest in training anybody, essentially. They had no interest in continuity, they had no interest in a common system. None of the systems ever agreed. Each one was a heresy according to the other. And the only thing that ever brought them together was the ballet, and Balanchine started this by using Paul Taylor.

LOWRY: But even somebody like Erick Hawkins said he was training people, but really it was just like décor for him, right?

KIRSTEIN: Well, Erick was a trained ballet dancer but he never cared. Essentially, none of them ever cared about anything except themselves; that was their limitation. That was their strength and their limitation.

LOWRY: And it was straight narcissism on the stage?

KIRSTEIN: Straight narcissism—the canonization of each character as they saw it. Martha was the earth mother or the great lover, and Erick was a wooden Indian.

LOWRY: Do you think it's possible that this tension between ballet and modern dance is really going to disappear now, because actually the whole movement is on the defensive?

KIRSTEIN: Well, they dance for themselves. They perform for themselves, and it's a kind of irrelevant heterodoxy. It doesn't make much sense one way or another, and for the government to back it seems to me a waste of money, as I've tried to prove. There will always be something called recreational dance. They used to have a very active folk-dance movement in the United States, which has been lost, although it's still active in Appalachia. I don't think it's a real opposition, because I don't think modern dance has anything to offer.

LOWRY: It's not a real opposition. It's not even as much an opposition as it was when Martha Graham kicked up that storm over the Ford Foundation's first program in dance, in 1963, centered, as it was, upon classical ballet.

KIRSTEIN: In Ballet Theatre, for example, since they don't have a choreographer and since Twyla Tharp is very ingenious, Baryshnikov latched on to her. It's perfectly normal that he would. There isn't anybody else. And she is comparable to the case of Paul Taylor. Paul Taylor took from ballet everything he could take from it, and the reason we can't use Paul—though I would like to, in a certain sense—is that he has made up for lack of technique by the violence of his men. I wouldn't risk our boys, doing what Paul makes his men do. It's absolutely spectacular, but I feel that you have to have a different kind of body to do it. His boys all look like wrestlers. We tried, earnestly, with Merce Cunningham's "The Seasons."

LOWRY: I remember.

KIRSTEIN: And nothing happened. And it can't happen, because essentially the attitude is different. Our boys are not virtuosic, they don't want to show.

LOWRY: What do you mean, exactly, when you say nothing happened? Do you mean there was no follow-up, no issue?

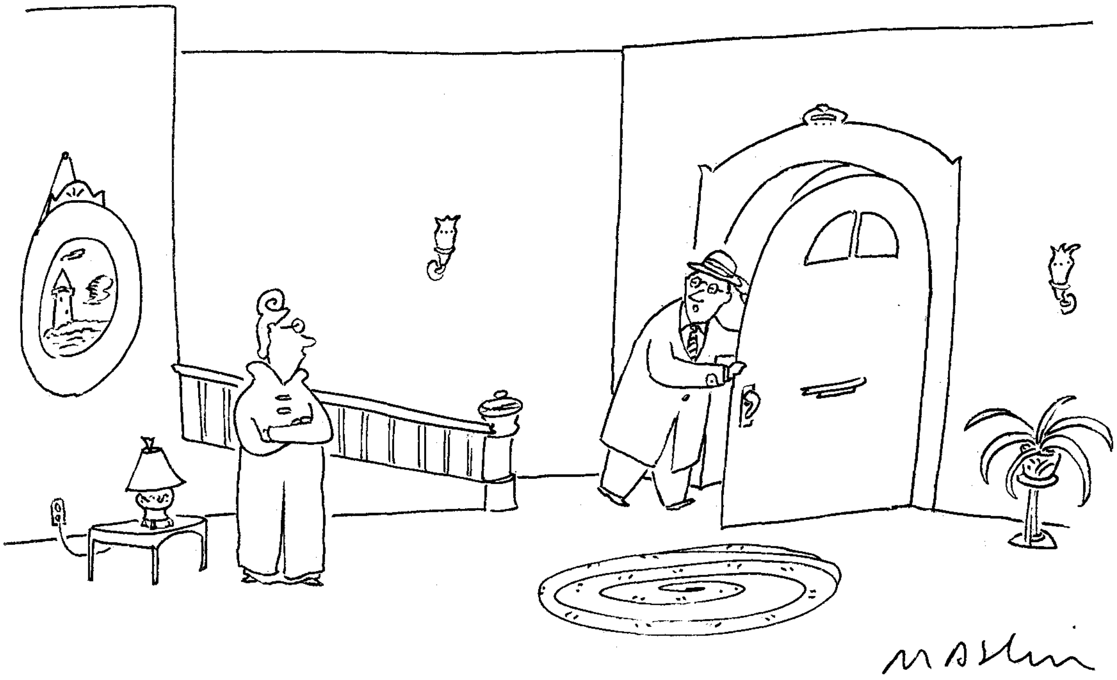
KIRSTEIN: No. There was no issue except from the point of view of spectacular acrobatics, which is what people like to look at, just as they like to look at the circus. In modern dance, what you see on the stage is a simulacre of strain. The point about ballet is it's a simulacre of ease. Both of them are very much designed and artificial, but what you see in the ballet is smoothness, and in the other you see angularity.

LOWRY: One of the problems the modern-dance movement is running into is that even its most fashionable luminaries, people coming along, have no history, have not even the history you were talking about—Bennington, and then Martha Hill, and everything carrying it on. They don't even know about that. Everything they see somebody do they think maybe is done for the first time.

KIRSTEIN: Well, they don't have any interest; they believe in creativity, but, as George said, the Creation happened once—after that, it was invention. They think the world has to be made new. They want to be untainted by history. That is their aim, to be untainted by history.

LOWRY: This subject I'm familiar with in many respects, but I realize I don't have it in your own words: I'd like to ask you about your feeling about serving in the Second World War.

KIRSTEIN: I always have had an



"Sorry, Elsa, there's just not enough time this morning for us to repeat our wedding vows."

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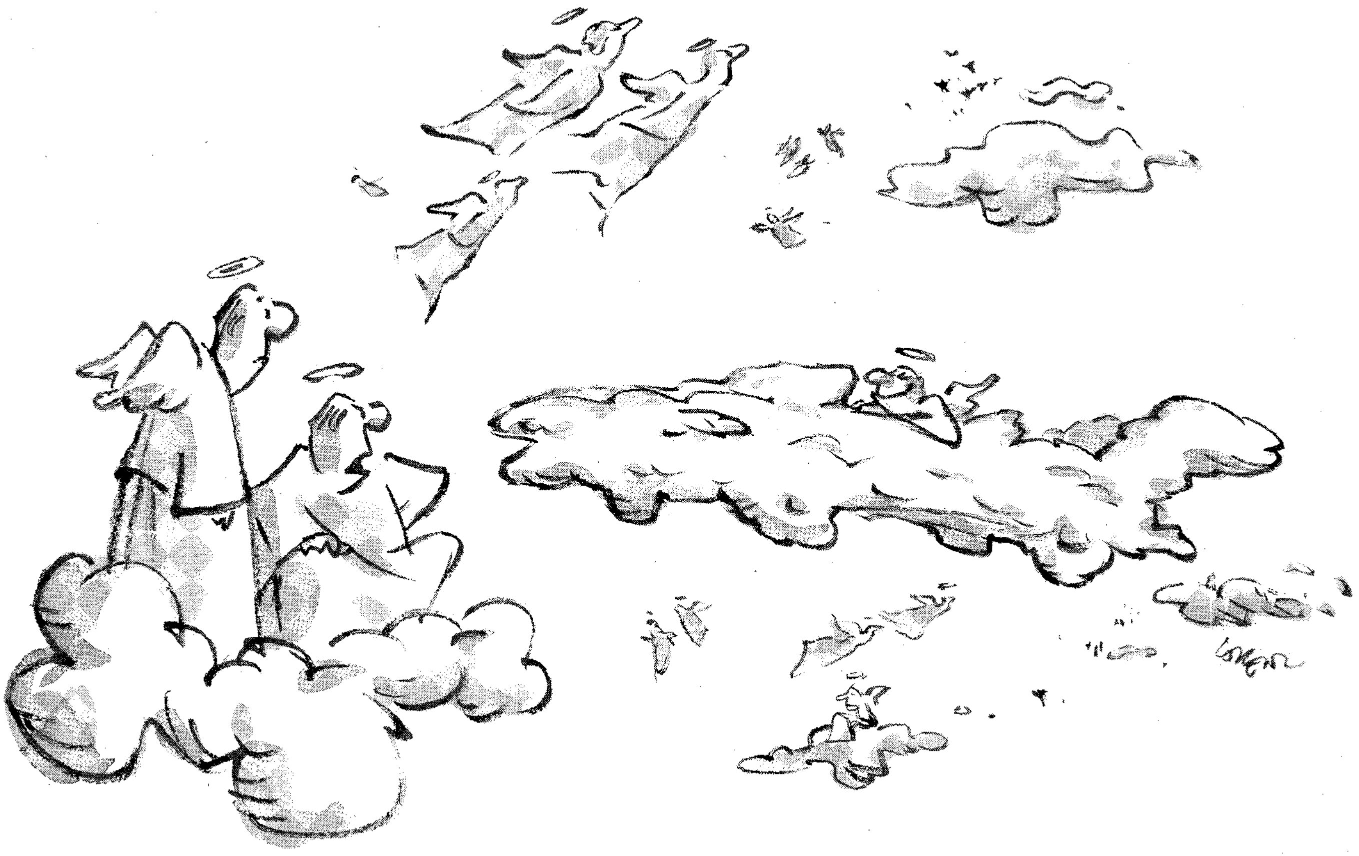

"*Why can't he just* fly *around like everyone else?*"

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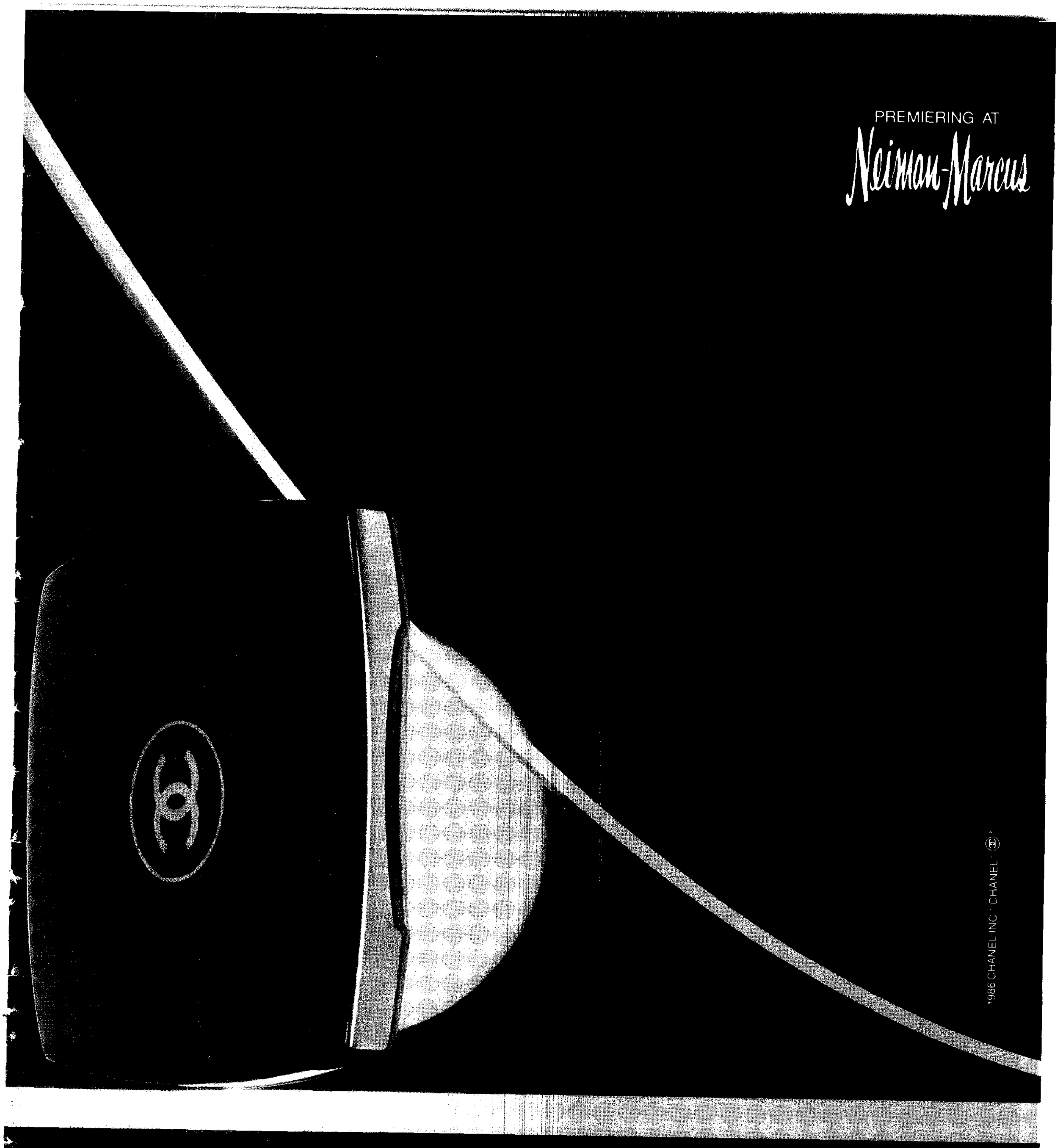
interest in the military, the military structure. I had two consuming more or less philosophical interests. When I was in college, I audited a course in metaphysics with Alfred North Whitehead, and I understood nothing about it at all. For me, philosophy as such was more strange and incomprehensible than non-Euclidean geometry. But I was very much interested in Aquinian theology. Also, owing to Eliot, the structure of Aquinas meant a great deal to me, and still does. And, in a worldly way, the organization of armies and military thought. It seemed to me that the theological structure was about Aquinian equanimity, it was organized equanimity, and the structure of the military was about organized lives. I'm not a political person; I'm an imaginative person, and I'm also very much interested in order, in the order of theology and in the order of the military exercise. It's also part of my interest in physical training. When I was a young man, I wanted to be a professional rider. I learned how to ride, I was a pretty fair rider, I learned how to jump, and I even had ambitions to be a kind of gentleman rider. But also I had been in love with the idea of Robert Gould Shaw, of Boston, who raised the first black regiment in the Civil War, and it seemed to me the Second World War was the key experience of my time and it would have been impossible to avoid it. In fact, I loved it. I enjoyed the Army very much indeed. I think the best poems I've ever written are about the Army. At West Point, I was housed with a Major Sharrer, who was a librarian, and I had a very clear view of the military academy, which I admired very much and which helped me enormously in relation to the ballet school. The attitude that I've always had—and I think Balanchine also had from his own experience, in Russia—was to adapt for civil uses situations that were essentially military. I liked the Army very much, and I was very lucky in that I had no rank and because I was absolutely free from the time that I landed in Normandy, three weeks after D Day. I was attached to Patton's headquarters. I went with the Third Army right straight through, ending up in Austria, and I had a very close connection with Headquarters Staff. I was a courier, I was an interpreter, and although I didn't have any rank, I almost got more freedom in that I didn't have any commanding officer. I was shipped from one command to another, and since I was useful, it was always on detached commissions one way or another, and I had my own jeep, and my experience was not as an infantry soldier; it was very volatile and very enjoyable.

LOWRY: Did you drive officers as your daily duty?

KIRSTEIN: Sometimes I drove officers; on occasion, I drove Patton. Usually, I was liaison between certain French units and Polish units: they spoke French, and since I spoke French quite fluently, it was useful to have connections. Later on, I was assigned to the arts-and-monuments section, where I ended up.

LOWRY: One of the plainest elements in your makeup is the ceremonial—your interest in everything from heraldry and the Royal Family to the Gagaku, West Point, General Patton, the cavalry. Yet, though polemical, the inner man certainly does not appear warlike. Do you have any theory about war as an outlet of the leisure class? There may be a way to put that more exactly or less clumsily, of course.

KIRSTEIN: It has nothing to do with



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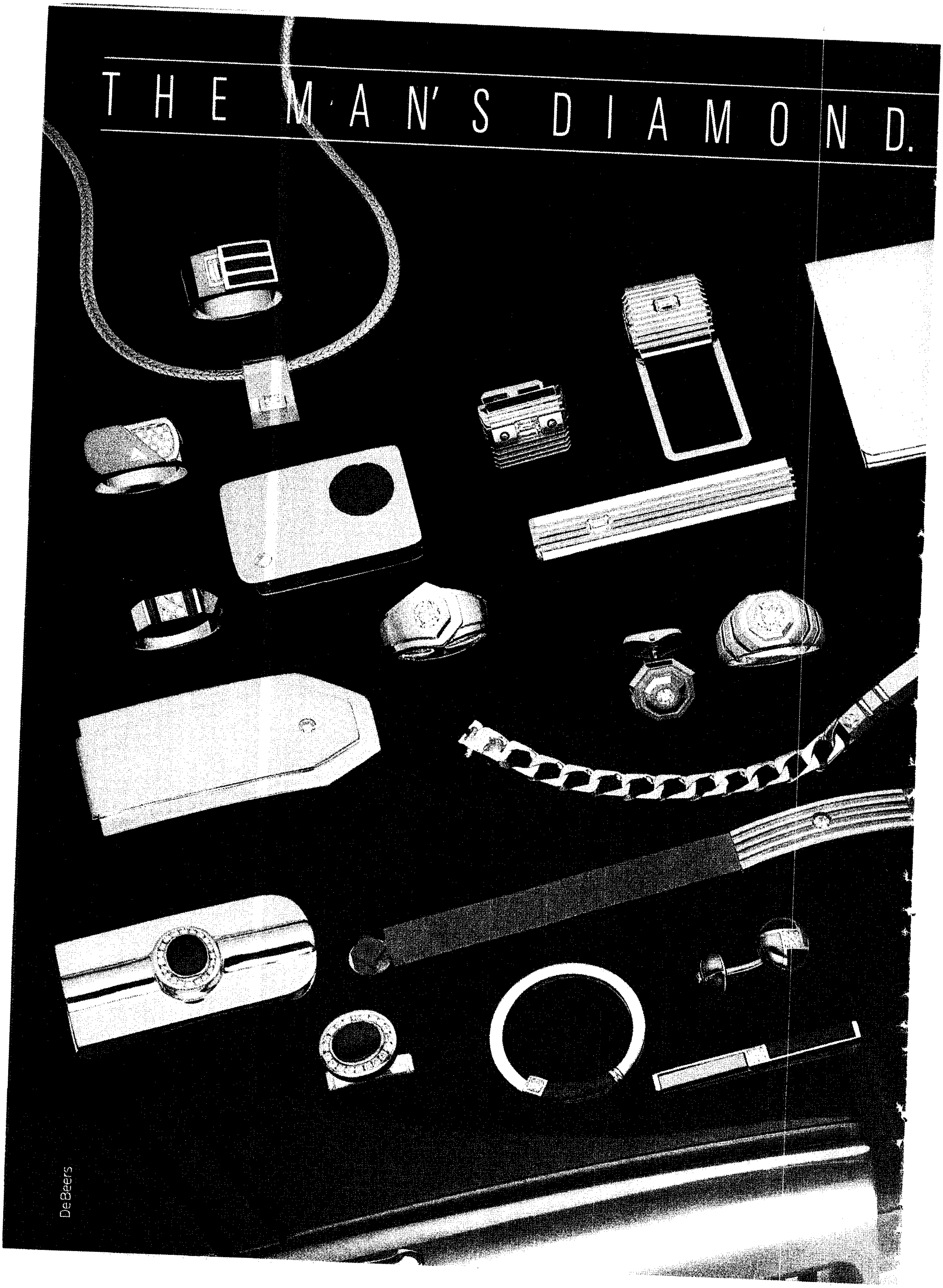
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aggression. All the things that you're interested in are really disciplines toward extremity: how do you manage extreme situations, whether they're spiritual situations or physical situations or psychological situations. This is what ritual is developed to handle.

Lowry: It's possible for me, as your friend, to speculate—perhaps harder for you. All this interest in the discipline and the ritual and approaching the limits of extremity—I know what those words convey to you. It is possible to imagine that what was out there in the last three hundred years—were you to turn to it in the deepening of that interest—was ballet. Well, it's always easier after the fact to say such a thing, I suppose.

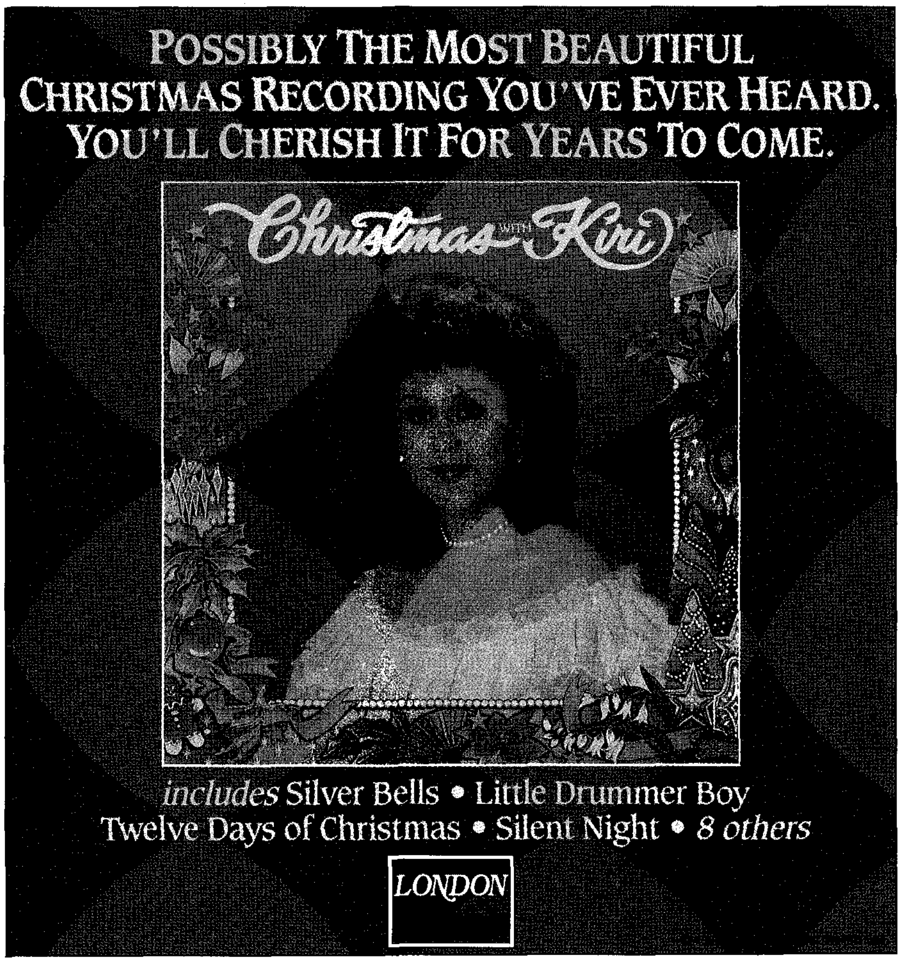
Kirstein: It's a discipline of the body; the body is what you're given. That's perfectly true. But my preoccupation with other kinds of disciplines, which would include the law, chemistry, surgery—there are logical, rational methods of handling extremity. Since most people don't recognize that they are in extreme situations, although they are most of the time, this understanding seems to me a useful tool.

Lowry: And it's one you must have been steadily conscious of for most of your life.

Kirstein: Yes, that's all perfectly true. But, you see, if anybody is born with a sense of order he comes to this. Anybody who is interested in art has to realize that the great motor of art, over the last four thousand years, is religion. And you can put it down as the age of the cathedrals or whatever you want to, but painting, architecture, and music—if you delete the religious principle from them you don't have anything. When you consider why it started, either in Egypt or in Greece or in the Orient, all art started from some kind of comprehension of cosmic order which they call religion, one way or another. It's a discipline, and it's made incarnate in ritual. It's incarnate also in painting and architecture and music.

Lowry: That is very interesting—"anybody who has a sense of order." Is it possible that, given this element you are now describing, any fraternity or any truly educated person will develop a sense of order and an interest in or fascination with discipline? Is it possible that this is also a kind of touchstone of what we mean by taste and education?

Kirstein: At the present moment, since the organized religions are bank-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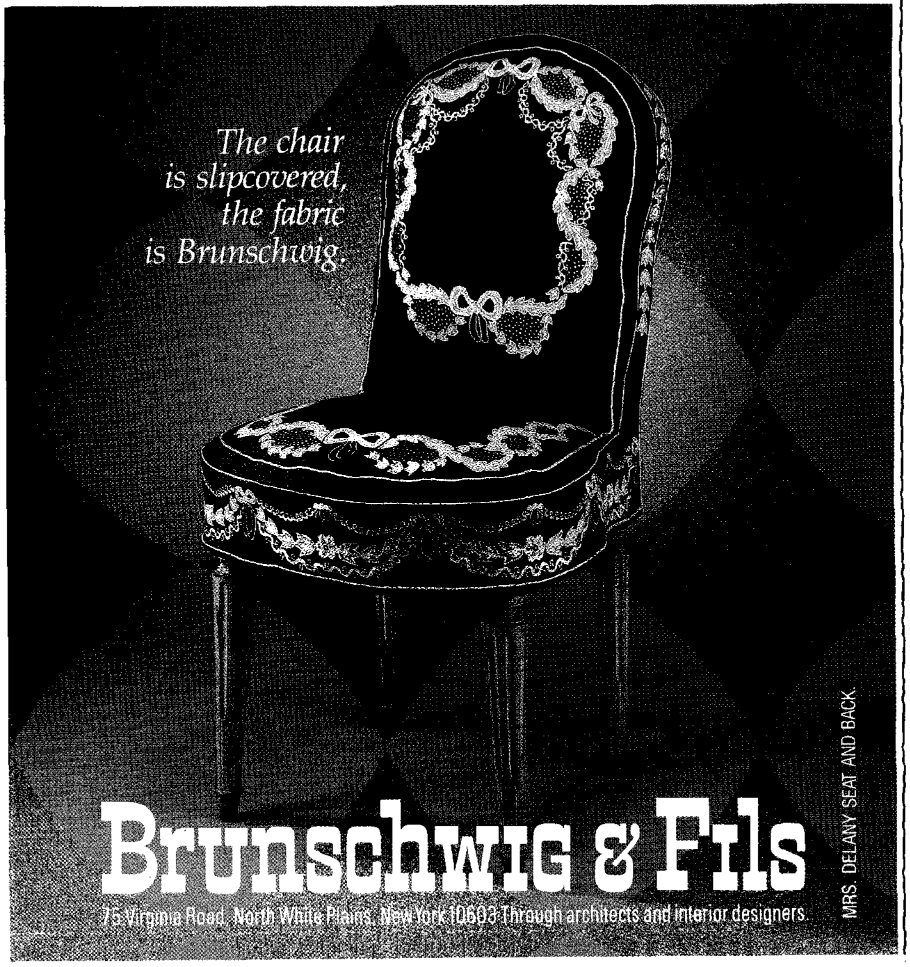
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rupt, it is very hard for people to get much satisfaction out of organized ritual. They have to rely on themselves rather than on any kind of tradition. And a substitute for this is art, and so people make cathedrals out of museums, although that's not really realized yet. The museums have been taken over by the dealers, and the appreciation of art is really the appreciation of negotiable value, if you want to be realistic.

LOWRY: But for a lot of people, even somebody as conscious and sophisticated as you, it can be a kind of substitute temple.

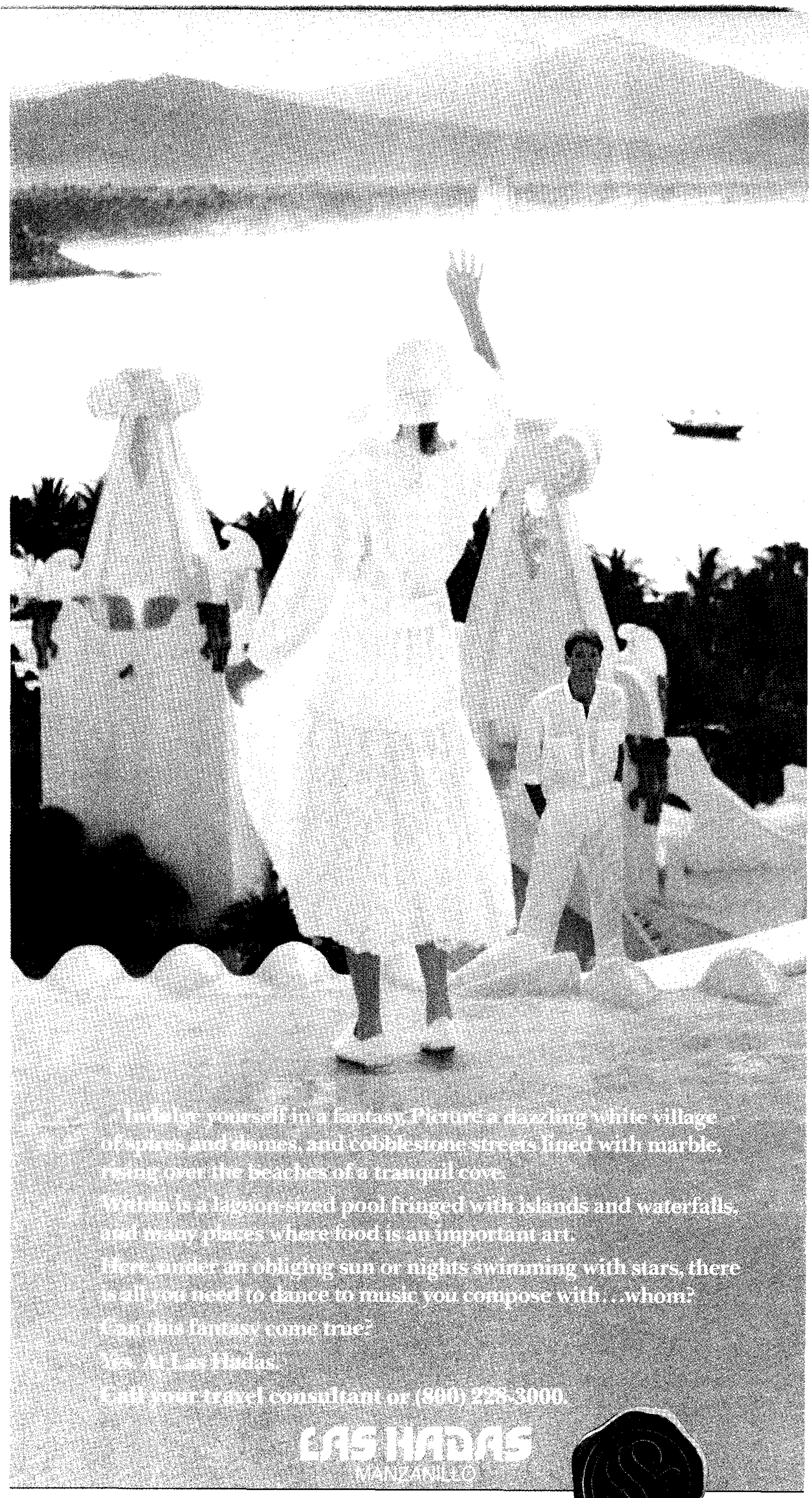
KIRSTEIN: But when you go to the Metropolitan and see herds of children driven through they look at absolutely nothing. But they can say they have been in the Metropolitan Museum. And similarly with the [1983] Manet show: no one looks at the paintings or realizes what a lousy painter he was. They have just been in the precincts of status and they can rub some of this magic off on themselves. It's rather like the medieval systems of placating objects that represented saints, or lighting candles, or rubbing the toes of St. Peter. There's no conscious rationalization at all of most of it, any more than there is in the rest of life.

LOWRY: Then for whom is art?

KIRSTEIN: For most people who have any capacity to look. Most people scan; they don't look, they don't see. When people go through galleries and say, "This doesn't do anything to me," what can they expect it would do to them—hit them over the head with a hammer? There are whole periods of art that nobody looks at. The Metropolitan Museum has one of the greatest collections of Islamic art in the world; no one is ever in these galleries, and they're closed half the time.

LOWRY: Just how lousy a painter was Manet?

KIRSTEIN: In my opinion? Clumsy, easy to look at, unfinished, no interest in psychology whatsoever—a simple French bourgeois hedonist who thought painting was good food and "*la peinture comestible*." You can eat it. And it appeals to people who really don't know anything about it, and most of it is unfinished, so consequently they can finish it. They see the indications that they can fill in, and there's a kind of elementary participation. But these people never understand that when you look at Manet what you see is a pathetic transposition of three painters: Goya, Velázquez, and Titian. And this dilution—since



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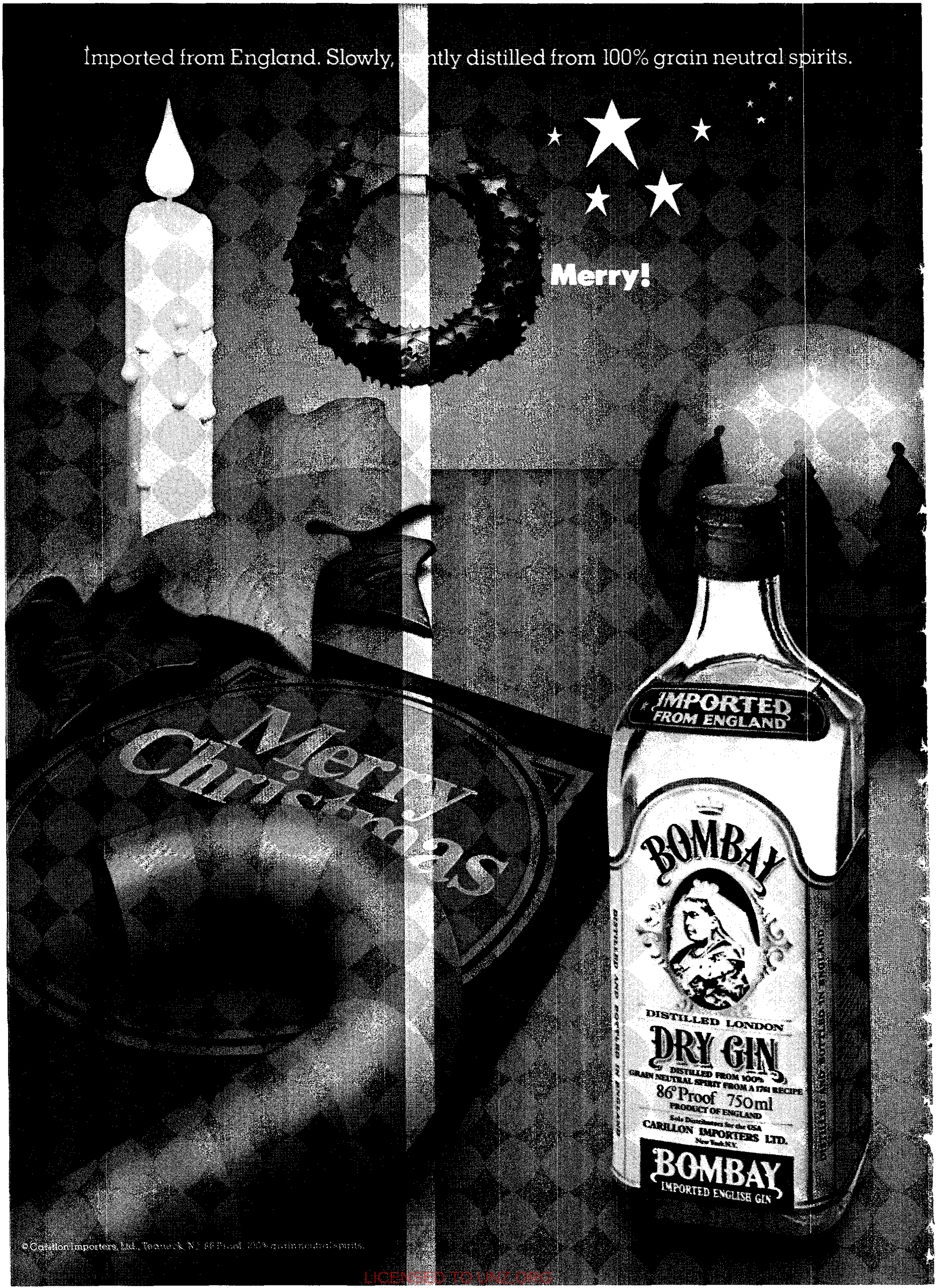
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all these artists have been tenderized by having been overexposed anyway, and over-looked-at and not looked at—this regurgitation is something that was eminently popular.

Lowry: And is?

Kirstein: Well, no. The show at the Met didn't do these paintings any good. Everybody realized that it wasn't much. And it was extremely inflated. Of course, it's very hard to have a big one-man show at the Metropolitan Museum without the hype of Philip Morris or of the Container Corporation or of somebody else who backs it. Plus you have a catalogue provided with reduced illustrations and poor color, and you can take that home and worry over it and think you've got something.

People rarely make any kind of qualitative judgments; they're not capable of it, any more than they make qualitative judgments about music or anything else, for that matter. And what I've tried to say to Redden was that a qualitative judgment is the most dangerous thing in the world. How have you a right to make a qualitative judgment? Alfred Barr, at the Museum of Modern Art, handled that marvellously. He never made a qualitative judgment; everything is equally interesting.

Lowry: Borrowing a statement you made many times and one that I've come to understand, this is almost true, too, of the dance critics writing about modern dance. They appear to have to work on the theory that it's all equally newsworthy, equally interesting.

Are you writing anything about the Manet show?

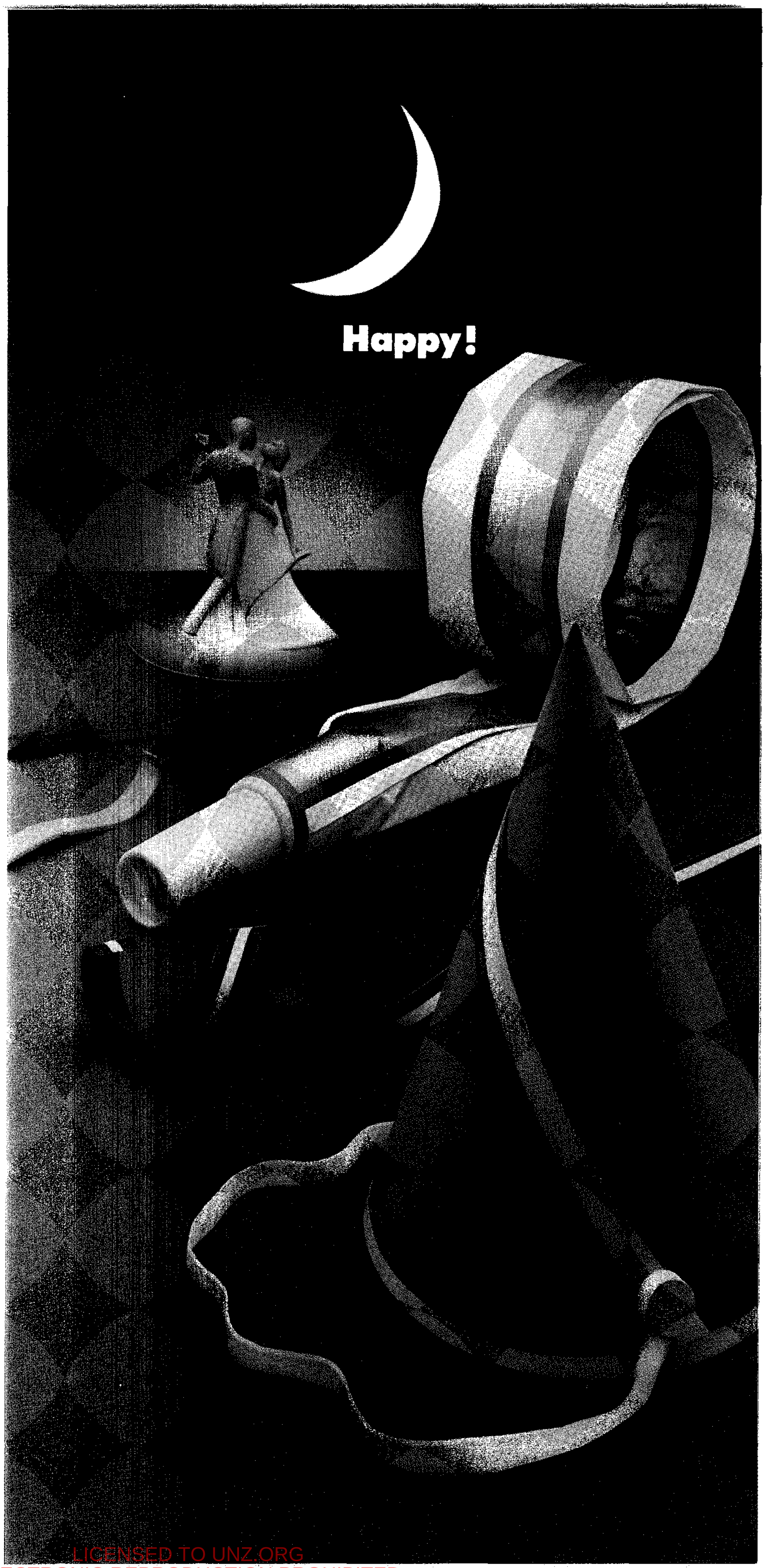
Kirstein: No. I don't want to write anything about what I don't like. There's no point in negative criticism.

Lowry: Well, at one time there was!

Kirstein: Well, that was political action. I'm not interested in changing anything, because I can't.

Lowry: This is a season in your life when so many things, you know, are being celebrated—concentrated activities on your part or directions or goals over many years. It's not only looking back, which they are doing about the School of American Ballet and so on—but you are being treated as a historical figure in your own time.

Kirstein: I think the most important thing is an attitude that I had very early in my life, which is suspicion about the limitations of the



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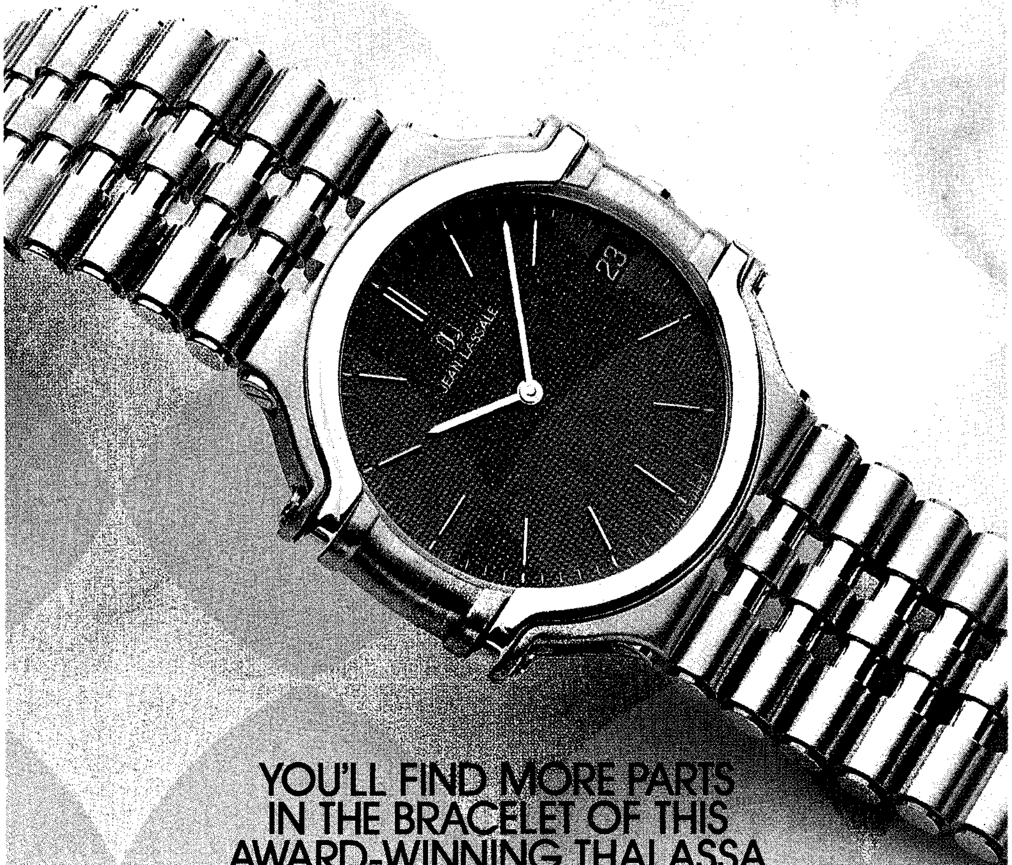

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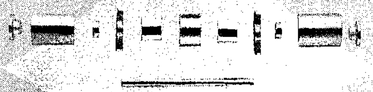

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self. And what I'm really interested in, and what is most concrete about whatever I've done, is the objects in this house. And they represent a kind of skill which I feel is completely lacking in most contemporary expression. This was a substitution of personal sensibility for a religious attitude and the advance in the twentieth century toward the canonization of the individual and the fragmentation of skill and digital mastery. And I feel that one of the worst influences in cultural history is the Museum of Modern Art. It is a corrupt combination of dealer taste, marketing, and journalism, and it has nothing to do with the essentials of what made art whatever it was for the last two thousand years. And it shows the general effect of personalization and idiosyncrasy. The advantage that the ballet had over all this was that it was a group effort and it was dominated by a person whose whole idea was a religious idea, selflessness in service. Modern art, as I see it, is nothing but a terrible inflation of a kind of cancerous self-indulgence, the great availability of the media, the terrible effects of behaviorism and of the idea of progressive education. There's nothing progressive about teaching a boy or a girl how to sing or to play the violin, or the piano, or teaching somebody how to dance, but, unfortunately, anybody who has any kind of feeling can slash a canvas, irrespective of whether it will last or whether it's of any interest. Since the magic of religion has disappeared, the magic of sensibility has taken over. And this is salable.

LOWRY: When you spoke of these objects with which you have surrounded yourself as showing digital mastery, discipline, and form—and this applies also to your other activity, your dedication to form and discipline in the collective work you did with Balanchine and the dancers—you said that this was your substitute for religion. But it did not actually, did it, fill up the whole of what religion still might have done for you or for your attitude? You have been, not in the same way, perhaps, as religiously and selflessly dedicated as Balanchine?

KIRSTEIN: My attitude toward that is that if you delete from art, Oriental or Occidental, the religious process and religious impulse over the last five thousand years you don't have anything. Take the question of painting; it's only a hundred years since secular painting has been canonized, and it isn't so much a question of painting itself—it's the question of *collections* of paintings. They're like postcards, and they've become dated, so, consequently, these are glosses on the painter's life, interesting only from the point of view of their sensibility. That's nothing to do with a general reference, which is what I understand religion to be. The advantage of the ballet dancers is in one sense negative—they're not educated, in the sense of secondary education. They don't have any received ideas. One can say they don't have any ideas at all. And that is a great advantage, because the ideas that have been given to most people merely make them operable in a world that has really very few values except existence. The art schools at the present moment don't prepare people for anything except success on a very limited basis, individually, and then a commercial success. There is at the present moment a very high grade of technical facility in a variety of illustrative functions—for example, scientific illustration. There are very good painters who spend their lives illustrating science—science studies—because they can be selective, in a way that photography can't be. However, the art of portraiture—that is, depictions of character as accepted by physiognomy—is almost completely lacking. People are perfectly satisfied with photography, and photography is a bastard art. Since it's cheaper than hand-painted pictures, the media and the critics and the dealers have managed to elevate photography into a category of its own, which is now highly lucrative. In all of these artistic manifestations, the question of quality never comes up, because if you invoke quality you have to have a historical perspective, and if you have a historical perspective that in any way compares present-day works to works of the past, then you're lost. So consequently the idea is to proceed with no reference to history, as if the present were the only fact that there is—there was no past.

LOWRY: Minutes ago, you practically equated the canonization of the individual with the loss of identifiable standards in art and the excuse for any kind of aberrant, so-called experiment as . . .

KIRSTEIN: Freedom.

LOWRY: . . . freedom as equal art. But you talked about the canonization of the individual and about the oversecularization of art. In your own long lifetime, so intimately involved with the work of so many different people

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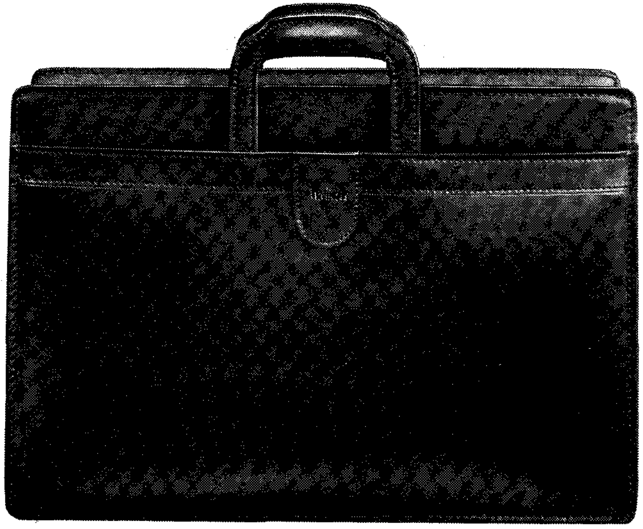

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and so many different disciplines of art, there have been exceptions to this, as far as loss of standards goes, failure to concentrate or focus, and so forth. You've already mentioned Balanchine as one. Who else? What other work contemporary with your life?

Kirstein: The Museum of Modern Art was founded on the basis that such a history as the life of van Gogh, for example, could never happen again. He hardly ever sold a picture in his life. The Museum of Modern Art was founded on a kind of charitable or philanthropic basis—that it would be impossible for anybody to delay recognition of a genius. It's not true. There are half a dozen painters today who are completely unknown and who after they die will be cashed in on, like everything else. The fact is that there is a vein of talent that always exists whether it's recognized or not. A number of painters of the seventeenth century, for example, who were completely unknown have surfaced in the twentieth century owing to the superior taste and industry and intelligence of art historians. And there are people not only in painting but in architecture and in sculpture who are continually being rediscovered or discovered.

Most people who are involved with the so-called creative process have no interest in it; they're interested only in the surface. And they're only interested in what's salable—the point is, what is the negotiable value. The prestige of freedom has been such that it has licensed any form of expression. And of course the people who have the most energy and who seemingly have the most individuality are the highest-paid. The size of the canvases of contemporary painting is preposterous, and the pictures are not painted for private satisfaction or impulse; they're painted for exhibition, and the walls are measured in advance as to what will work. And this is rather different from the question of the mural painter, because mural painting was to teach stories to exemplify ideas. There are very few ideas in contemporary art. There are merely impulses.

Lowry: What about in other fields? What about Stravinsky?

Kirstein: Well, Stravinsky devoured the past, the same way Picasso did. Both Picasso and Stravinsky digested history, and continually Stravinsky would repudiate the modernism that he had created and go back further and further.

Lowry: But even in the modernism Stravinsky created he was working

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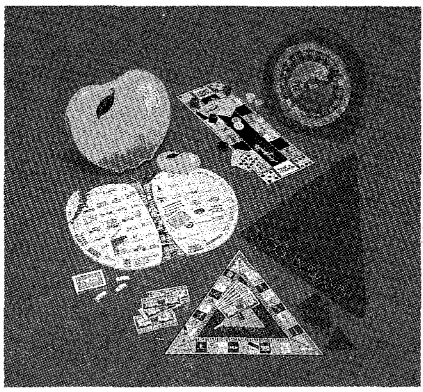

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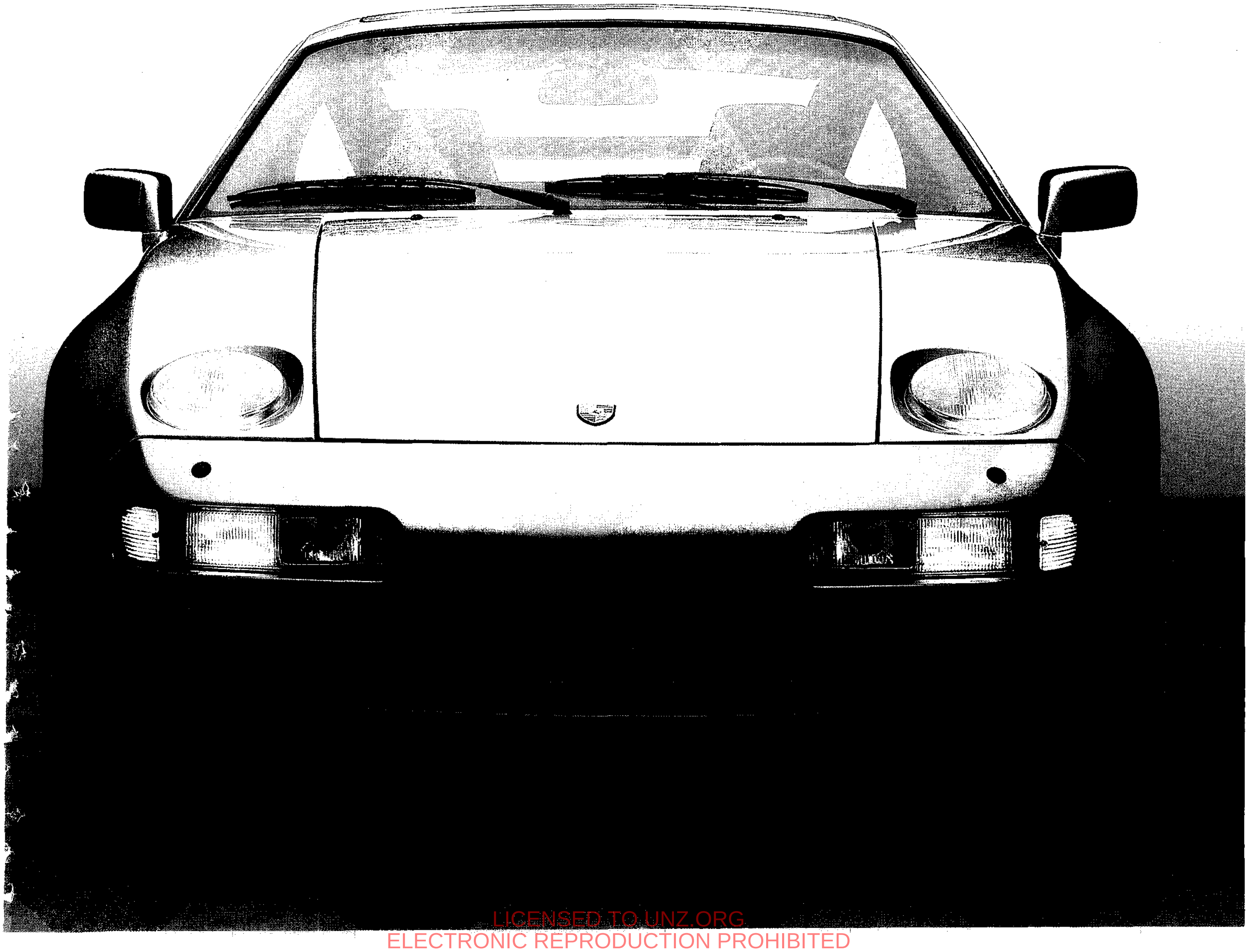

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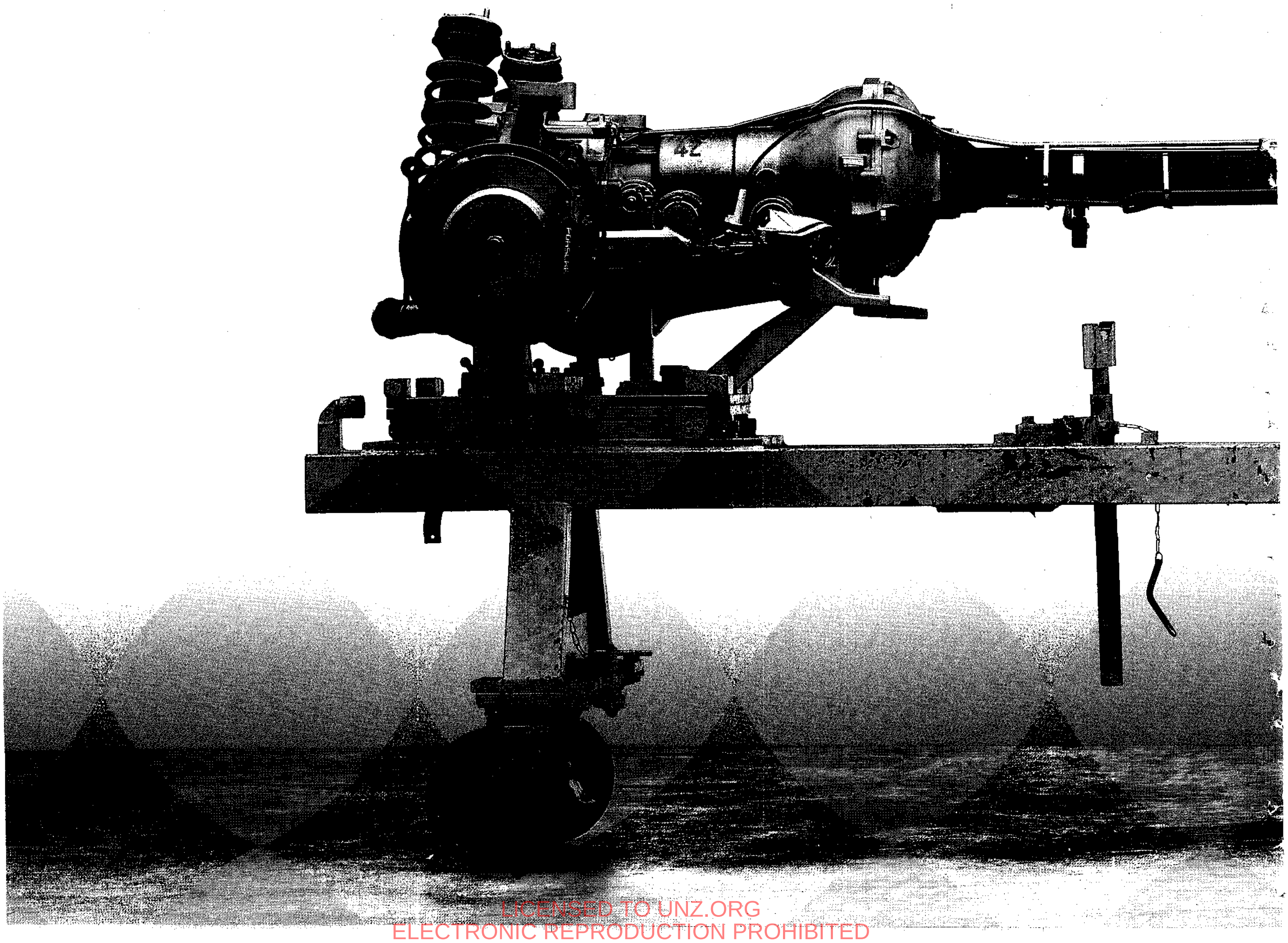

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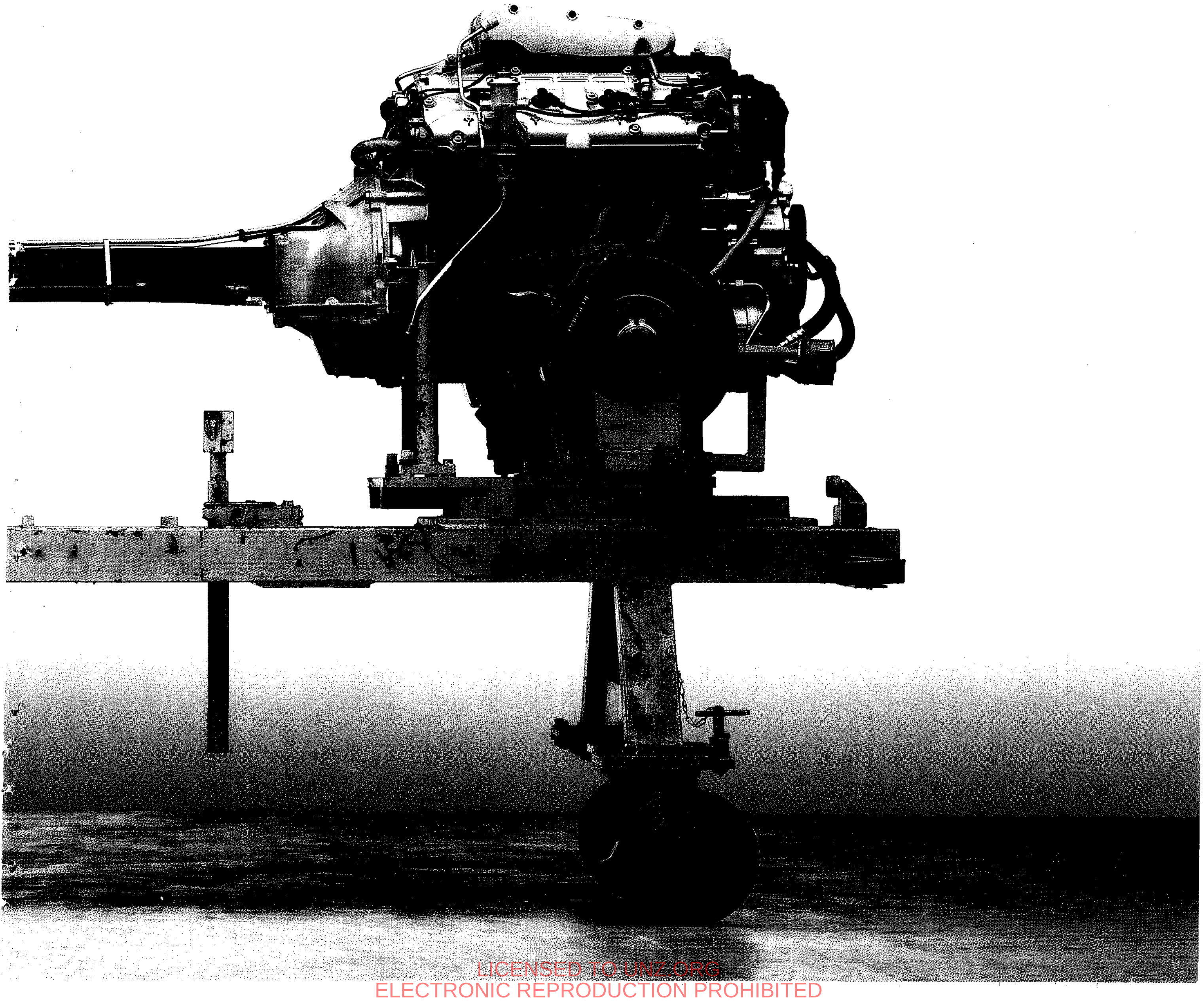

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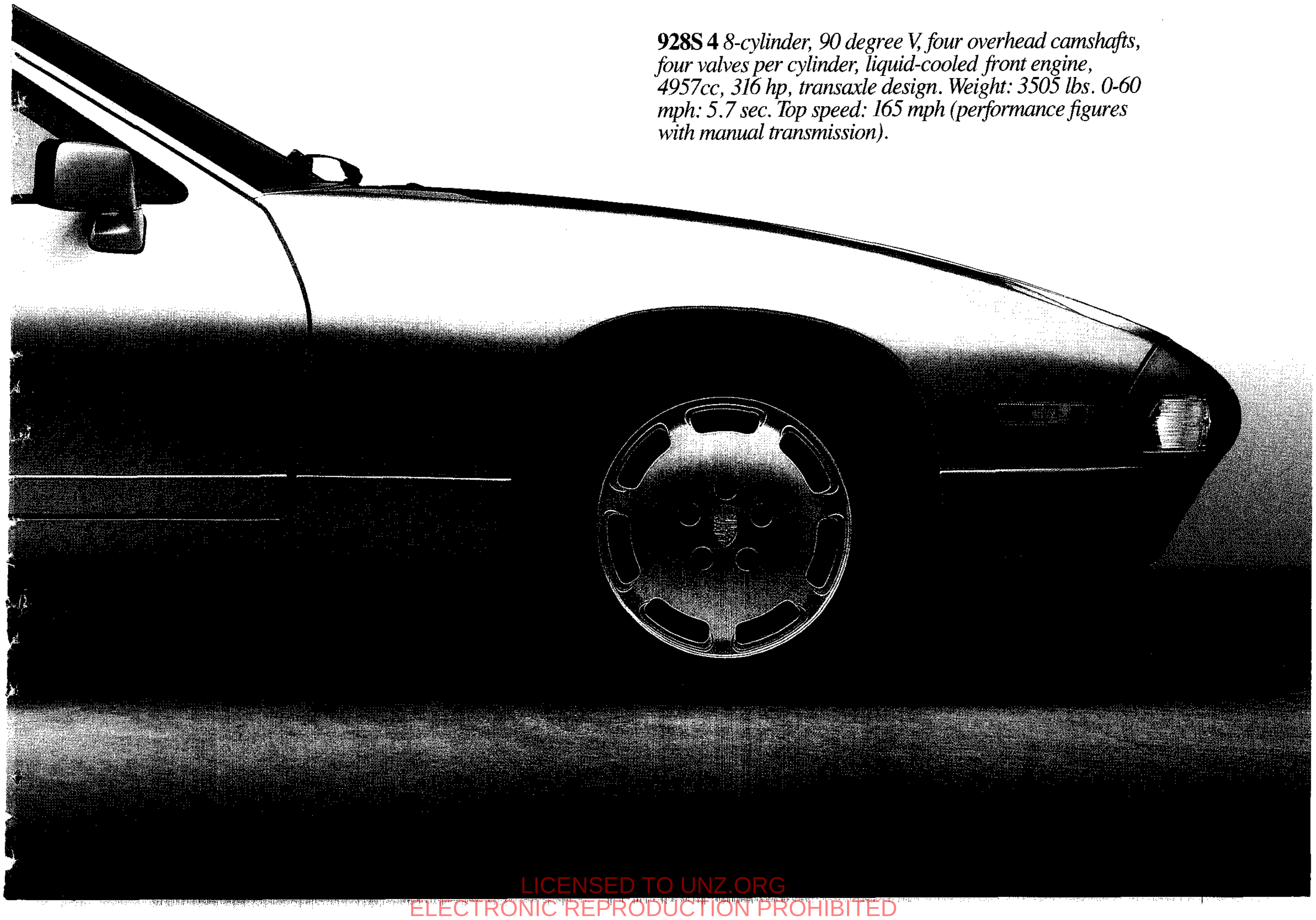

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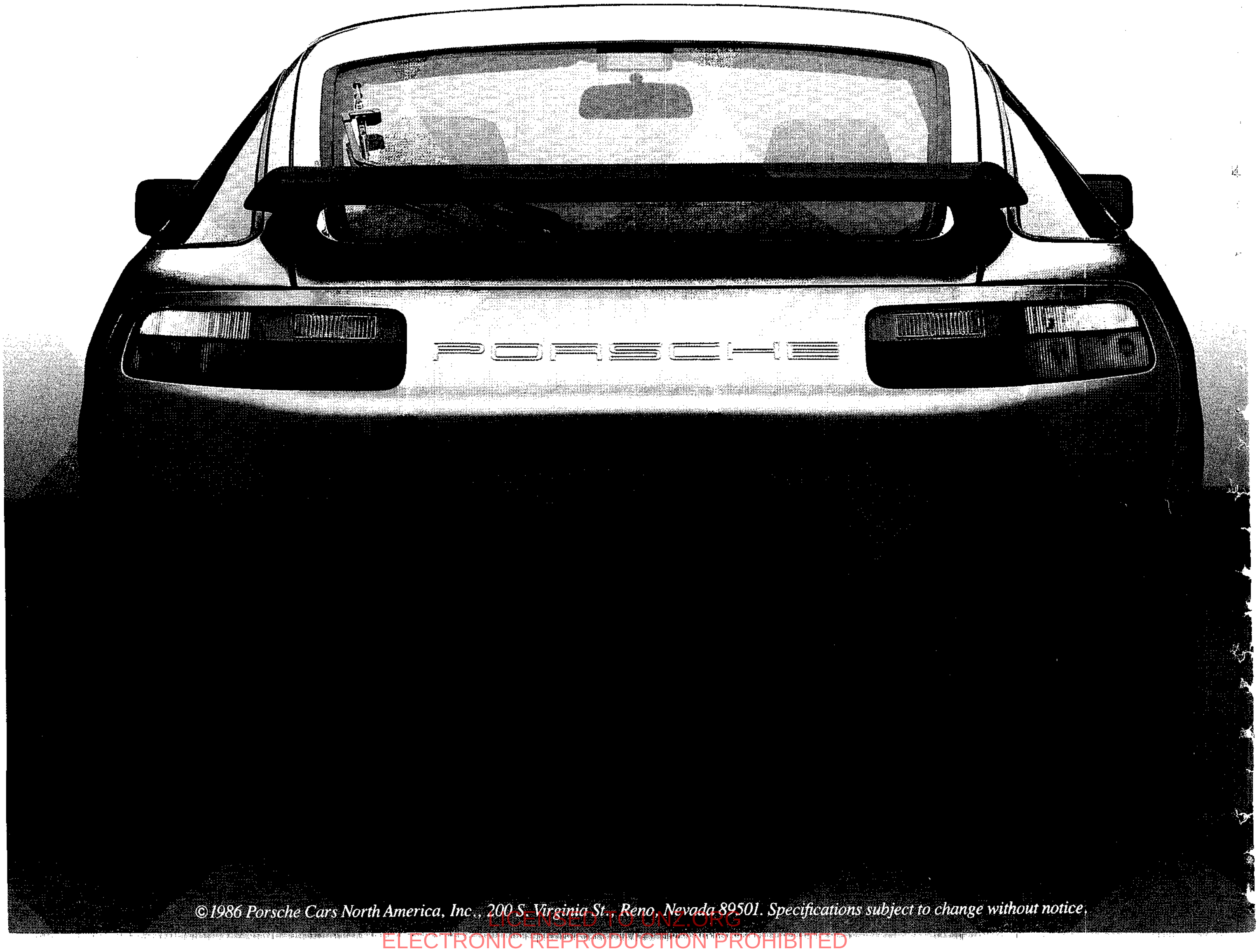

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toward form and discipline, wasn't he?

KIRSTEIN: He didn't work toward form; he used form. He was a formal composer. But it was always for a purpose. It wasn't to sell, it wasn't a negotiable value.

LOWRY: And he was in this sense an exception to a great many of the characterizations you've been making?

KIRSTEIN: Well, one of the worst things besides the Museum of Modern Art is the academies. For example, the Music Departments of Columbia, Princeton, Harvard, and the advanced universities have made an absolute orthodoxy in which they have eliminated melody and attempted to experiment with sonority. Sonority has taken the place of melody, and the only place that contemporary music seems to me to have any vitality is in popular music. The money that foundations have spent on experimental music has been absolutely valueless. There has been hardly a piece that can be played twice. And the people who teach this also teach other people to teach this, and there are three generations of lost music students who earn their living by teaching useless information.

LOWRY: There are many signs that this whole thing about music is about to collapse, about to be swept away.

KIRSTEIN: I don't know if it is or not. There's very little musical theatre. There hasn't been a repertory opera written in the last twenty-five years. And the loss of any interest in the human voice except in popular singing is due entirely to the teachings of the academies, and the kind of music that is produced by the most exalted academies is played only by academicians for an academic audience. It has no place in theatre. If you take a list of the contemporary operas that have been produced at the Juilliard School, they've all been done as a kind of honorific obligation to people who represented something at one time or another in their lives. But they're unlistenable, and they've been produced once or twice.

LOWRY: There's a big effort—I'm sure you're aware of it—to treat the whole Gershwin-Porter musical theatre cum opera, or opera theatre, together, as a discipline and form that ought to be studied with the same concentration and intensity as dance or painting or whatever is studied.

KIRSTEIN: It's just the same kind of thing that the academies love—to cannibalize anything they can cannibalize. The whole point about the songs of Gershwin or Porter was they were

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sung. And it was a necessity to sing them; they corresponded to a popular need and a popular interest. And when the academies take them over they always tear them to bits, justify them from the point of view of their own vanity, and make them absolutely useless.

LOWRY: Right now, of course, composers like David Del Tredici are being stroked as transitional figures to a future when melodic and operatic music and symphonic orchestration will be coming back into the mainstream.

KIRSTEIN: The only problem about that is that melody is a gift. It isn't something you can learn. These people can't teach it. The *technical* skill of people who are turned out in the music schools is very high.

LOWRY: Probably higher than ever.

KIRSTEIN: Probably higher than ever. But their execution has nothing to do with the composition. You're not going to teach somebody how to write a Cole Porter song, because too much of it had to do with the life that Cole Porter lived, the life that Gershwin lived, and these kids don't live that life. All they can do is make a reduction or a dilution of it. The only person who was successful in opera in the early twentieth century was Kurt Weill, and he came out of a very honorable tradition of German opera, where it was alive. It's never been alive in the United States.

LOWRY: Going back to what you said about the museums and painting . . .

KIRSTEIN: People go to exhibitions to have been there, not to look at them. First of all, they can't go to the blockbusters at the Met and look at them, because there are too many people. But they have been to the Manet show and they have been to see the Leonardo drawings. It's an occasion; this is a substitute for going to church. They don't have to go to church, but they go to the museums and hope some of the magic will rub off on them. It has very little to do with the one-to-one attitude toward the work looked at. There are very few people who look at anything, and if they do they're not equipped to look at it. They are much further equipped to look at football, which they know something about and which they see frequently. How long do you suppose that any ordinary person stands in front of a picture to look at it? And there's a reason for it: there's nothing to look at. It's a superficial impression of an image, without any attention to when it was done or what it is. There's an incidental interest in the value of the work—that is, the negotiable value.

Lowry: There's much to stand in front of and look at in the various departments of the Metropolitan or the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, or whatever. It doesn't have to be something created in the last twenty years.

Kirstein: Yes, but you go to the Metropolitan Museum, it has that great collection of Islamic art, but nobody's interested. Who looks at Chinese painting? It all looks like it's done by the same man.

Lowry: Yes. And in a way it is.

Kirstein: Well, in a way it is. What is the change in Egyptian art in four thousand years? It's all done by the same sculptor. And this all comes back to the lack of any kind of essential interest in anything except oneself. People go to be nourished; they think that they're getting nourished by art in the Metropolitan Museum. To a certain degree, they are. But the fact is they bring nothing to it.

Lowry: While the great art of the West and Asia and the Orient and Islam had to do with religion or the Biblical, theosophical, theological, there were also—were there not?—at least to the art historian or cultural historian, triumphs by the individual artist?

Kirstein: Oh, yes, continually, but there are always great artists who appropriate whatever the system is for themselves, and they break the last particular organization and they substitute another organization. But in time it all floats together.

Lowry: The real problem that you were analyzing was *not* one artist or another not using the system or making it work for him but the system itself, by the absence of religion, by the absence of a scale of values or . . .

Kirstein: Well, a lot of it started with the whole idea of individual sensibility—the principles of French romanticism, or Rousseau. The French Revolution made it possible to smash the guild system. Certainly it had abuses, but with the smashing of the guild system came the elimination of the idea of the masterpiece. The masterpiece was something merely that a young man would offer as evidence, testimony to his mastery, in order to be received into the guild. It wasn't a question of an individual work of art of particular exception; it was merely a diploma piece. When craftsmanship

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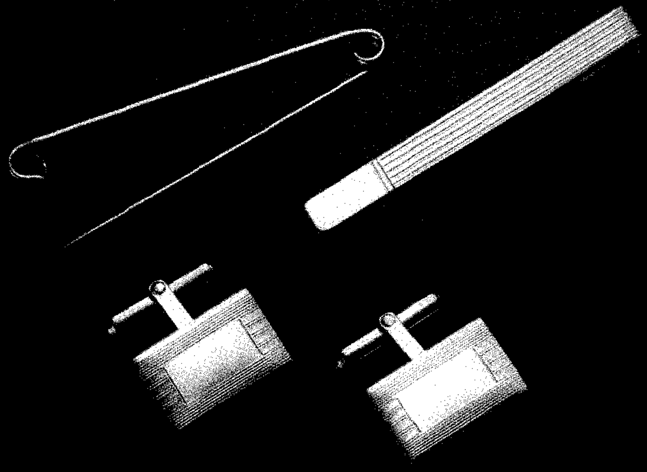

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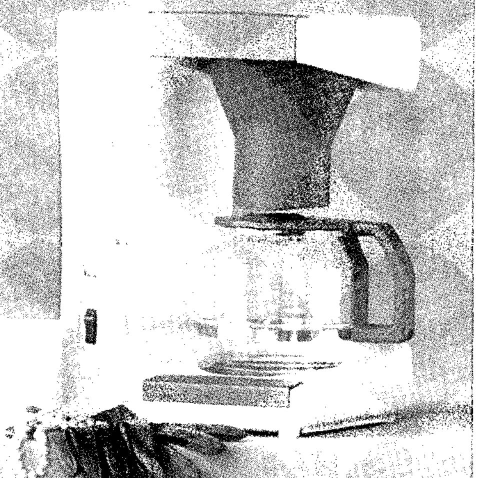

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was commercialized and made generally available by the French Revolution and by the Industrial Revolution, there was, of course, a terrific mechanization, and it was very hard to break into it, and, particularly in France, you had the idea of immediacy. The fact that paint got into tubes enabled painters to go out into the fields and paint directly from nature rather than having to reconstruct models, as Gainsborough did, in the studio. But the worst of it was that the dilution of this sort of individual sensibility has developed now into anything—anybody can do anything, and there's no standard of any sort. The only standards that last in the art schools today are the standards of the illustrators, for fashion illustration or for record sleeves. And the record-sleeve industry is on the level of automobile design; it's extremely skillful.

LOWRY: A museum director in one of my recent meetings was making a didactic point that when they finally put all the less familiar, early van Goghs together with all those that people knew, and had a mammoth exhibit, one could see critically that there was *no* point in canonizing the work of *one* painter like that.

KIRSTEIN: Well, these are complicated things. The question of the essential or intrinsic or absolute value of an artist like van Gogh—it's entirely separate from his reputation. You have to consider also the political aspects. The Dutch have a hero, so there are social aspects. There are commercial aspects. There's the question of the coöperation of the commercial galleries that have van Goghs to sell. It's very hard to make an absolute . . .

LOWRY: Well, it was a canonization of the Rijksmuseum, also.

KIRSTEIN: And also the Rijksmuseum, sure. But the point is that none of this is a simple thing, and when people talk about art or write about art it's always one simple aspect of it. There's very little general connection to an over-all historical context that I can see. The only art criticism I like to read is specialist books or articles on individual people in relation to their own time. But what I think about it has no value to me; because I'm so limited in my appreciation and so limited in what I know, I can't say I like X, Y, or Z. All I can say is that a certain picture interests me.

LOWRY: But you made something of a similar point in talking about the Manet show. Except maybe you wouldn't think Manet was as important a painter as van Gogh.

KIRSTEIN: Not nearly. Baudelaire said the best thing about Manet. He said, "You are the first of the decrepitude of your art." And that was absolutely true. And Manet is the painter for people who don't understand anything about painting. There is no psychological interest in any of his portraits. It's about what the French call "eatable art." It's all about cooking or eating, one way or another. It's attractive, splashy paint with some kinds of dilutions of Velázquez and Frans Hals. And the great pictures of Manet, if you think they're great—the "Olympia" and the conservatory picture—these are inconsiderable to me in comparison with most of the pictures that were Pre- or Post-Impressionist. Compared with Degas, it's nothing. Or compared with Lautrec. Manet never looked at anyone. He had no interest in psychology whatsoever. There isn't a good portrait that he painted. There are some charming paintings of women, but there's no portrait of a man that you can look at. And the pictures of Clemenceau, for example, who was a great figure of his time, are an absolute giveaway.

LOWRY: I want to ask you a question about this same historical span we're discussing. At one time, your travels west of the Hudson were, I suppose, more about Ballet Caravan than they were for other interests, and in very recent years, like the last five to seven, you've been going around more to particular parts of the country helping to develop resources for the school and the company. And then, if my recollection is right or my information is right, you have always done a good bit of travelling among the museums in the United States. Has the fact that New York is not America, that there are other historical and indigenous or cultural roots in the country, been of any interest to you? I don't mean in terms of dance or where that's found or . . .

KIRSTEIN: Well, the same interest that any museum anywhere has. I'm pretty familiar with European museums and I'm particularly familiar with American museums.

LOWRY: But that's qua museum. But qua the Middle West, the West, the South, the East, the Southwest?

KIRSTEIN: I don't see any difference between that and the provincial museums of France or Germany.

LOWRY: Forget about museums. I'm talking now about history, I'm

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talking about regionalism, I'm talking about cultural differences. Are they of any interest to you? I know that in the period or history of the Civil War they were. We talked sometimes about things in the history of the Far West, but we haven't talked much about American history or individualism.

Kirstein: The provinces are always the provinces. There's always a distinction between a metropolitan center and a provincial center.

Lowry: But they have no particular interest aside from that to you? I mean, are you interested in observing the people or environment or landscape of a particular part of the United States as being different from another part?

Kirstein: No, no. It seems to me that in relation to what I'm interested in there's only one problem: how to get out. It seems to me there's one problem about Latin America: how anybody of any independence can get out.

Lowry: Have you enjoyed being in Latin America?

Kirstein: I hated every minute of it.

Lowry: Mexico, too?

Kirstein: Well, Mexico is a different situation. They had a kind of revolution in Mexico that more or less established them. Mexico is really unique. They had a wonderful efflorescence of half a dozen very powerful painters, and they had a central government that funded these people magnificently. And they had a terrific past and the chance of archeological discovery over a long period of time. And this very, very rich past provided a kind of imaginary or artificial springboard for contemporary painting. But since the twenties very little has happened in Mexico except in the field of archeology. You can't compare the present moment in Mexican painting with the times when Siqueiros, Rivera, and Orozco were working. Nothing's been done since. The twenties were actually the direct result of what happened in Paris between 1912 and 1914. Diego Rivera was there—a friend of Picasso's who took Cubism back to Mexico City and repudiated it and started painting as if he were Giotto. But he did it with the authority of the advance guard. He absorbed the advance guard and then went back to make these huge historical pictures, which had at that particular point a social importance. But Mexico is a provincial country like another. You can't think of a Latin-American painter of any importance. There are some excellent individual artists in every country, and there were some interesting painters in Argentina, but from the point of view of anything to look at I don't know where it is.

The question of provincial art is a very difficult and a very hard problem, because, first of all, the provinces do feed the metropolis, and you cannot ignore the fact that the provinces exist. But they're always under a kind of curse, they're under a local curse. And they exist to fertilize to a certain degree the big centers. But without Paris or without London, without Rome, without New York it's very hard to imagine a national culture.

Lowry: What person you knew in your own time—or knew *about*—would you say you most admired?

Kirstein: Well, there were a number of people who taught me whatever I know in a variety of fields. If I were to name the artists I liked best or the people in the political field whom I admired most or friends on the basis of personal sentiment? I'm not sure what you mean.

Lowry: No, I know those would be different clusters and different degrees, and so on. In your life, more than any man I know you have been conscious of so many people who were distinctive in one way or another. They were creative or imaginative or they were patrician or active, or whatever, but some of them are to be admired? Maybe that's not the best verb, but it's the one I'm thinking about.

Kirstein: Well, there are people whom it's hard to speak of, because the people I admired the most at various times in my life are, as you say, in different clusters. The people to whom I owe most would fall into the artistic and the political. In a certain sense, I had to learn political practice, and in that I can say I learned the most from Nelson Rockefeller. I was very closely associated with Nelson from 1930 to the war. We were friends of a sort, in a way in which young men are friends neither of whom has found the vocation he will ultimately proceed on. I knew Nelson very well indeed and he knew me very well and we were very fond of each other, and later on events occurred in which the normal assignments of power differed and I was afraid of him. I *became* afraid of him, and certain events happened from which I learned by adversity. The adversity that I found in Nelson was my doing. I learned a great deal about the manipulation of power and about the uses of people. At first, I felt used in a situation which I don't want to talk about but which was very instructive.

Lowry: Instructive or constructive?

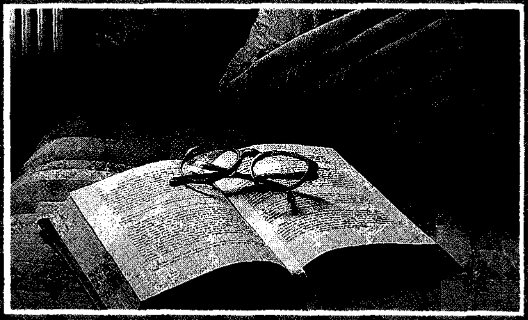
Kirstein: Instructive. I suppose constructive, too. But in any case it was due to my innocence and my ambition, and at the time I felt like a fool. Later on, after the war, I had little contact with Nelson, but, on the other hand, we were close enough for him to ask me about the construction of the State Theatre and to let me choose Philip Johnson as the architect—which was an enormous gift. It could have been given to Wallace Harrison if Nelson wanted. Harrison wanted the job very badly, and there were a number of other architects, but I insisted on Philip, and I think I was very richly rewarded. I think Nelson thought so, too.

Lowry: It interested me when we were talking the other day and you said you had no ancestry, you had no hierarchy, like those young people at Harvard when you were there. And yet you so steeped yourself in all kinds of traditions—not in a formal sense—that you had money *and* background *and* position. You really did.

Kirstein: Well, that was my luck. It was the luck of how my father—I mean, what I was given. And it was always something that I felt in a sense could be taken away from me if I didn't handle it right.

Lowry: You were *so* conscious of it. Even a few years after I first knew you, and you had just finished saying something rather complimentary about something I'd done, you said, "You know what your trouble is, Mac? You had neither an education nor money of your own." Well, it's certainly true I had no money of my own, but I had a Ph.D. at twenty-eight. And yet I knew what you meant, because your education went outside the university. You told me the other day that it counted for more outside than in.

Kirstein: But much more, and what I tried to do, after I had met Mr. Gurdjieff and had seen a considerable number of things, was to attempt to embrace a kind of totality; that is, extremities of experience. And also extremities of people, people whom I would not otherwise have known. I think that was extremely useful, because I've never had any problems about the acceptance or refusal of so-



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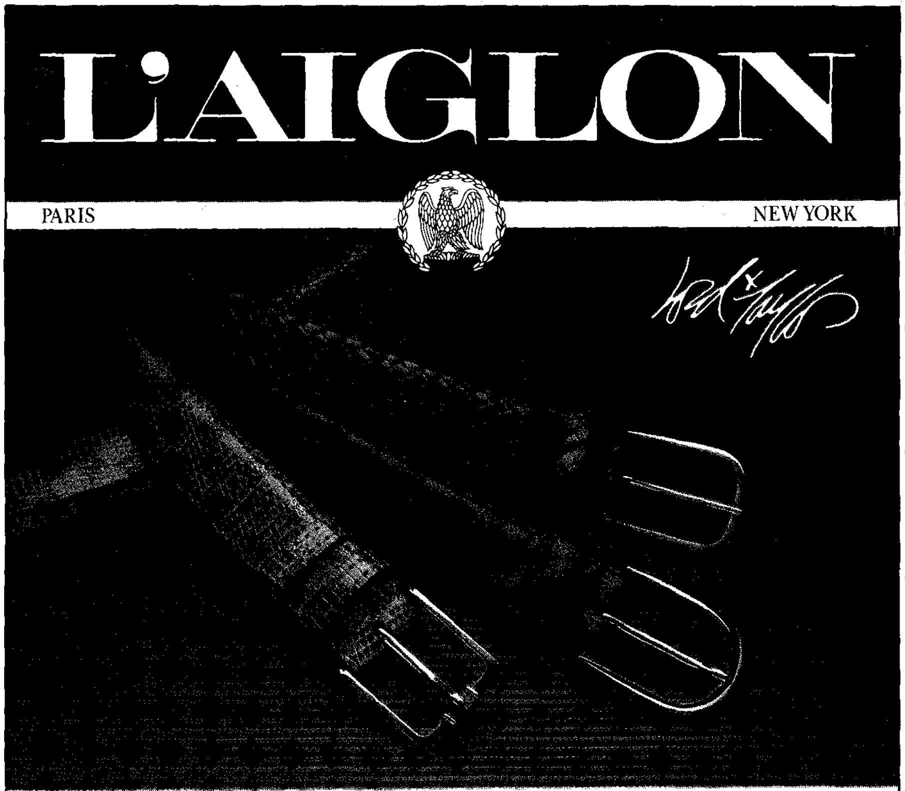
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cial situations. None of that has ever bothered me.

LOWRY: This may seem odd, but when I think of other people roughly in your generation who had some claims to an education or a kind of polymath interest in things and also claims to privilege, people like Evelyn Waugh or Edmund Wilson, or whoever, even in these attitudes of the sly fellow—not being interested in having the admiration of people for whom you have none, and so forth—in Wilson or Waugh I recognize a quality I would have to label snobbery, but that's not what I understand by this withdrawal or removal or what you call coldness in *you*. I do not understand that as snobbery. Do you know the distinction I'm asking about?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I don't know. I have a kind of inverse snobbery.

LOWRY: How?

KIRSTEIN: Well, I prefer good workmen and plumbers to most painters and writers. I like carpenters. I like people who can do something with their hands and people who have a professional attitude about their lives. And I have a very deep-seated contempt for most of what goes on as creativity, which includes almost all novelists. And the only people I really have an interest in are filmmakers, who seem to me to have some kind of capacity for surmounting terrible obstacles and in some way getting done what they can do. I don't feel this about novelists, I don't feel it about painters, and I don't feel it about musicians. There are no musical repertory works that have been written since the death of Stravinsky and a long time before. And as far as novels go they seem to me the coarsest kind of journalism. And as far as painting goes it seems to me expensive wall coverings. But films I'm very much interested in, and I would like to have made films.

LOWRY: This question could also be taken on many different levels. It's a trite question, but it often works. When you look back, are there specific things of any significance you would have done differently, or things you wish you *had* done?

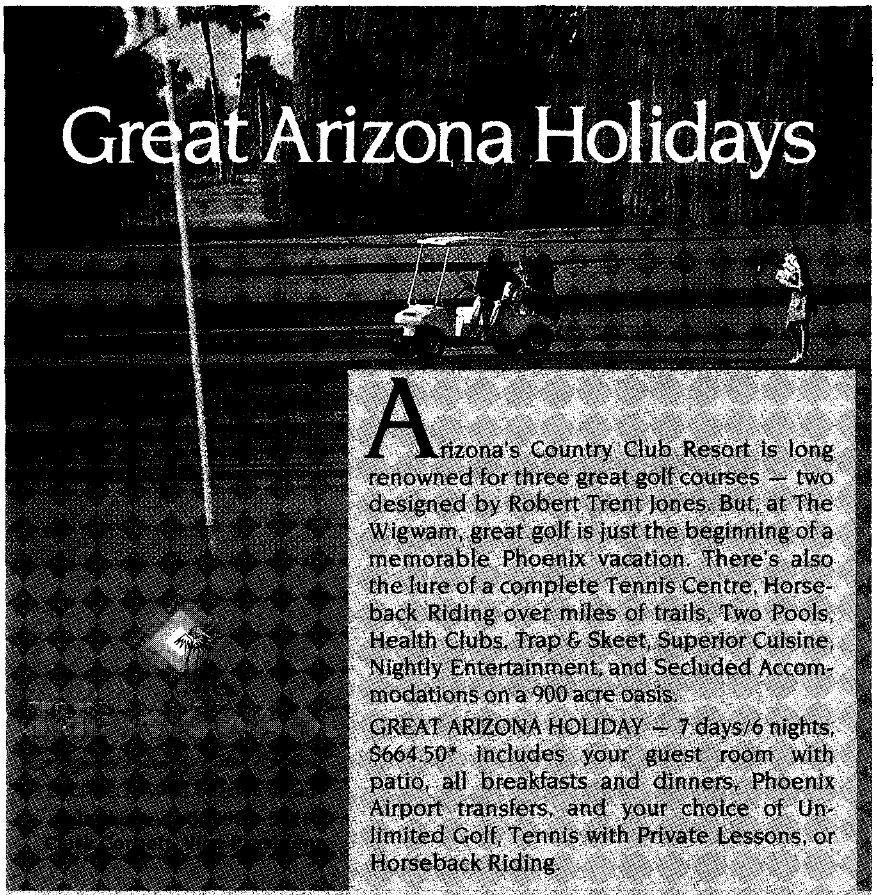
KIRSTEIN: I would like very much to have worked in film. I think the thing I most regret of the things I haven't done is not to have been able to work in film.

LOWRY: Let's talk about that.

KIRSTEIN: Well, I got to know Eisenstein when he was here in New York. I was an enormous admirer of his. And I became involved in a battle with Upton Sinclair over the destruction of one of Eisenstein's films ["Que Viva Mexico!"]. Also, I got to know Jimmy Cagney in 1934 and we became friends. I admired his acting very much and his attitude about films. He was trained as a dancer, and he had both a dancer's body and a dancer's capacity. He incarnated for me the most appealing and tragic aspects of American lower-class life—something that was very exotic to me and about which I knew nothing until I came to New York. And I learned about the world that Jimmy Farrell wrote about and Jimmy Cagney portrayed in his films. Harvard was a kind of luxurious afternoon; in New York, I discovered something of what actually went on, and it always seemed to be the subject of a film. The kind of film I would like to have made would have been like what Eisenstein saw as historical epics. I would love to have been involved in a film about Lincoln. Later on, I wrote a book about Robert Gould Shaw, and I would like very much to have done a film about that. And I would like to have been a portrait painter. I think those are the two things I regret.

LOWRY: Can you think of times when the pieces on the chessboard could have been moved differently or would have made differences that would have been significant?

KIRSTEIN: Oh, I think that in most cases there are determining conditions over which we don't have control. About fifty-one per cent of what one does is determined by exterior forces. And there seems to be a certain inevitability about how you handle everything, what your capacity is, what your energy is. One acts inevitably in relation to one's energy and to what one is faced with. I think that I wasted a lot of time on certain things; for example, all the years I spent at the American Shakespeare Festival and Academy I think were a waste of time. I should have known at the beginning that it was an impossible situation, simply because there's no training for classical actors in America and no desire for it. And because the system of agents and the magnates of Hollywood and TV and soaps are such that they prevent anybody from learning his craft. And all that the others were interested in was the imposition of personality in any case. I spent a long time vainly hoping that somehow one could find actors equivalent to English actors, and it was time— Well, I don't



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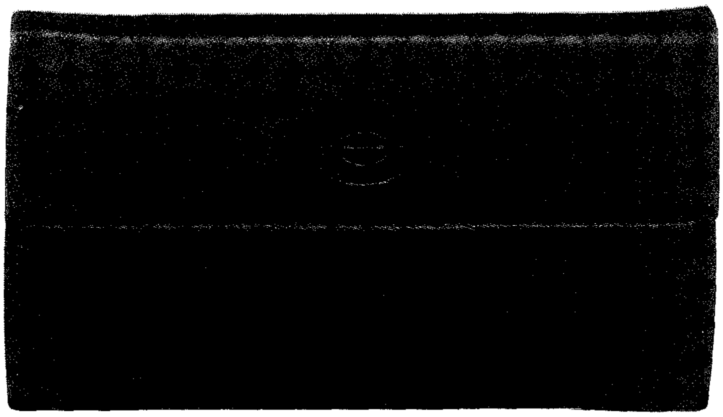

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know whether you'd call it wasted or not, but anyway it proved to me the impossibility of a national theatre.

Lowry: This is another one of the same kind of interviewers' sweeping questions: If you were not to have had your life in the twentieth century, what other century—what would be the second choice? Or part of a century?

Kirstein: That's rather a hard question. I have no feeling of nostalgia. I like very much the time I was born in. I feel that if there were any other time that I'd like to have been born, it would have been in the early part of the nineteenth century. And I feel, actually, that I *was* born in the nineteenth century. The twentieth century didn't start till 1914 or maybe 1918, the end of the First World War. My education was limited by the pace of the nineteenth century, and I felt and still feel that I'm very much a part of the nineteenth century, and modernism is something I don't recognize. I feel *contemporary* but not modern. And the style that I like—the taste, the pictures, the furniture, the living—is probably the effect of the England of Disraeli. It's the attitude of the New Englanders just before that. And another period I might choose, I think, would probably have been Boston from 1850 to '65, during the period of Abolition and the Civil War. I have no desire to have lived in Ancient Rome or the Renaissance. I'm quite content, I am very happy to have been brought up amid the relics and the legacy of the nineteenth century in New England.

—W. McNeil Lowry

(*This is the first part of a two-part article.*)

•

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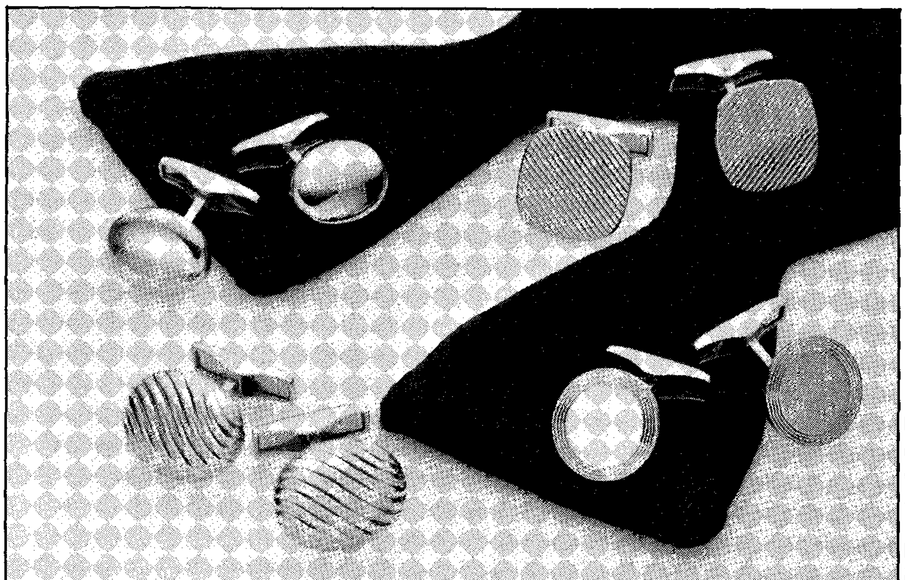

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

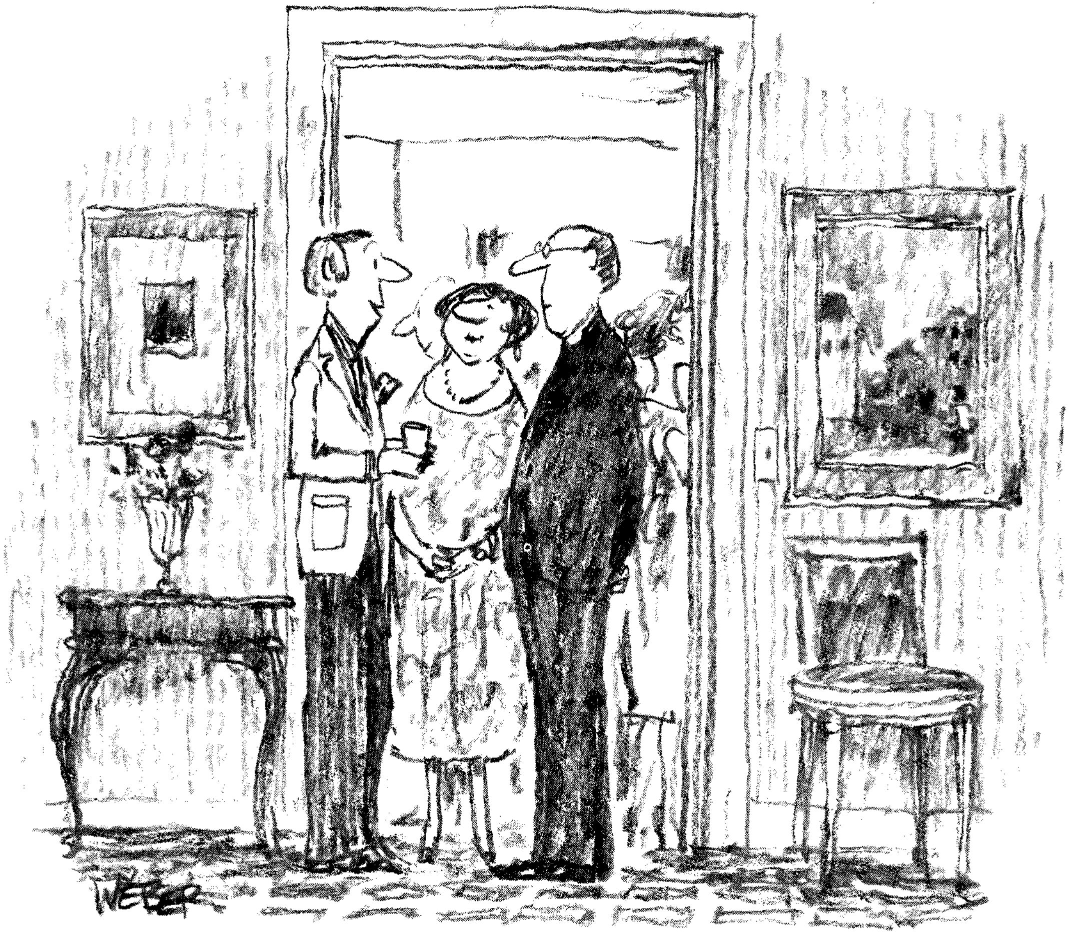
Families

Beth Henley's play "Crimes of the Heart" may suggest a quaint variation of early Tennessee Williams ("The Glass Menagerie" especially) or William Inge, or even Paul Zindel or Horton Foote, but it isn't bad. It has a goofy charm. Henley has a streak of campiness in her, and she curls the edges of the dialogue with Southernisms, or what we take to be Southernisms. ("How's my hair?" "Fine." "Not pooching out in the back, is it?" "No." That same non-pooched-out woman complains of a polka-dot dress she was given for her child: "The first time I put it in the washing machine, I mean the very first time, it fell all to pieces. Those little polka dots just dropped right off in the water.") The three actresses who star in the movie version—Diane Keaton, Jessica Lange, and Sissy Spacek—bring it such overflowing wit and radiance that they waft it up high. The play is thin, and the playwright's screen adaptation is just the usual "opening out," but the actresses put so much faith in their roles that they carry the movie, triumphantly. It's too bad that the director, Bruce Beresford, didn't know how to give it a push and make it spin. With these three actresses sparking off each other, he might have caught something like the whirling magic of Robert Altman's "Come Back to the 5 & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean." But the movie has some élan anyway, because these women working together are something to see. They giggle over the stagy exposition, treating it like choice, well-loved gossip.

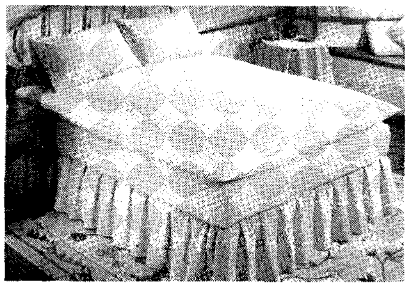
The sweet and dippy Babe (Sissy Spacek), the youngest of the MaGrath sisters of Hazlehurst, Mississippi, has shot her rich lawyer husband and faces trial. The oldest, Lenny (Diane Keaton), has been too shy to have boyfriends; at thirty, she takes care of Old Granddaddy, has a routine job, and keeps up the family home. The middle sister, Meg (Jessica Lange), may have had a few too many boyfriends; she started smoking and drinking at fourteen, and the town regards her as a tramp. Now Lenny sends word of the shooting to Meg, in Hollywood, where she has tried to make a career as a singer, and she returns. The three are united in the house they grew up in, and their childhood alliances and petty jealousies start up all over again, along with a fierce, us-against-the-world family loyalty. A friend of mine in Oregon went to see Diane Keaton in "Mrs. Soffel" at my urging, and then wrote me that "at its best 'Mrs. Soffel' is about the mystery of where love and courage come from." I think it could be said that at its best "Crimes of the Heart" is about the comedy of where love and courage come from. Its goofiness is integral: it's a comedy about wacked-out normality. The characters say dumb things with such simple conviction that they seem to have a glimmer of truth. When Babe wonders "why Mama hung herself," Meg says, "I don't know. She had a bad day. A real bad day."

It's no surprise that Keaton and Lange are full-scale funnywomen; the news here is that Spacek, after all the tiresome studied acting she has been doing in recent years—she's dull as an achiever heroine or a suffering heroine, she's dull when she searches for depth—can still play on instinct and be terrific. (Yes, she was lovely and gave a fine performance in "Raggedy Man," but it lacked the oddball zing of what she does here.) Spacek looks as if she'd rediscovered how much fun acting could be, and she isn't afraid to play a character as weird as her Carrie was. Babe verges on the bizarrely unbalanced, and the trick in playing her is to make her human—to make her motives accessible. Spacek empties the foxiness out of her face and plays this zany Babe with a propulsive sureness. Her twang gives a flourish to her lines, and when she has her star turns—a series of slapstick disasters that she has to bring off all by herself—she's *up* for them. She has real voltage here; she holds her own with big Jess and gurgly, wild-eyed Keaton—and with energy to spare.

Lange must have gained something



"I really enjoyed the Bible."



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from playing the forthright Patsy Cline in the 1985 “Sweet Dreams.” She seems liberated from the “image” fears that constrict the acting of so many stars, and any anxieties about the self-exposure in screen acting seem gone, too. It’s a strong, unabashed performance. She’s as confidently sexual as any American screen star past or present, and when this woman gets to shake her chassis it’s some chassis. From our first view of Meg, on the bus heading back to Hazlehurst, we know she’s had some rough times. What we’re not prepared for is the gusto that Lange brings to Meg’s schoolgirl meannesses. Meg can’t resist showing Lenny that she knows her one poor little secret, and she has no compunction about doing the dirty to Babe, who told it to her. The way Lange plays this scene, Meg enjoys her sisterly one-upmanship so much that she’s rather lovable when she spills the beans. Underneath, she conveys the feeling that keeping a secret is just a piddling convention anyway. And Lange goes beyond the individual character: she leaves us with the image of a smiling tough cookie in a blue denim jacket and a short skirt that sets off her long legs—a rowdy, down-to-earth American archetype, everybody’s favorite waitress. (I came to like her faded denim better and better; she wears it like a badge of honor.) Lange seems an effortless comic virtuoso here—there’s no fussiness in her acting. Her soft voice has a defiant edge, and she’s economical even in her delivery of the film’s best line. When Babe is worried because the husband she shot has threatened to send her to an insane asylum, Meg reassures her by saying, “Why, you’re just as perfectly sane as anyone walking the streets of Hazlehurst, Mississippi.”

Keaton’s Lenny is abashed about everything; she has so many timidities she’s in a constant tizzy. Keaton is a master of high-strung unsureness; when she plays comedy, she has a miraculous gift for fumbling in character—for showing you the emotional processes that lead the character to say what she does. What makes Warren Beatty’s performance in “McCabe & Mrs. Miller” stay in the mind in a way his other performances don’t (not even his Clyde Barrow) is that he shows you McCabe fighting through his own clumsiness and confusion, trying to express what he doesn’t fully understand. That’s what Keaton’s Lenny does. Her tangled feelings spill out in all directions, and what makes her a great comic presence is that she always reveals more than she means to. Babe and Meg talk about how she has been turning into Old Grandmama—Lenny wears her grandmama’s sun hat and gardening gloves, and she huddles, and hides her body in shapeless pinafores. (In some ways, the play, which was first performed in 1979, is Beth Henley riding the 1977 “Annie Hall” down South.) Keaton’s nervous old-maid Lenny is a much richer character than you could guess from reading the play. She’s a wonderful mixture of raw shyness and unconscious, eye-batting flirtatiousness, and her “fumbling” lifts the character right off the page. Even her feeling her way into a Southern accent seems to become part of the character. And Keaton is great at playing a sense of injustice for laughs: Lenny’s resentment of Meg for having been granted childhood privileges denied to the two others wells up in her uncontrollably, as if she were still thirteen. She’s had so few experiences as a grownup that she keeps their childhood alive all through the movie. She’s the responsible sister—a thirty-year-old hopelessly good little girl longing to be naughty.

As a cousin of the sisters—an officious bitch who’s so much like Mae, the mother of the no-neck monsters in “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,” that she comes across almost as a homage to Tennessee Williams—Tess Harper gets laughs with a minimum of waste motion. They’re stagy, predictable laughs, though, and in these moments that the stars don’t dominate, you can recognize how much they bring to the material. Without them, the fluidity is gone, and there’s nothing but artifice; the movie stops. The director’s work seems negligible (he doesn’t show any flair for slapstick in the scene of Lenny flapping a broom and chasing her cousin out of the house), but it’s inoffensive. David Carpenter is likable as Babe’s impressionable yet hardheaded young lawyer. And Sam Shepard appears in the small part of horn-rimmed Doc—the fellow Meg ran out on when she went to Hollywood to satisfy her granddaddy’s idea that she had a big career ahead, and the fellow Lenny has always had a crush on. Shepard plays his scenes with the drab seriousness of a weak man who was left in the lurch once and holds no hard feelings but doesn’t intend to let it happen again. When Doc and Meg talk together, their voices are in quiet,

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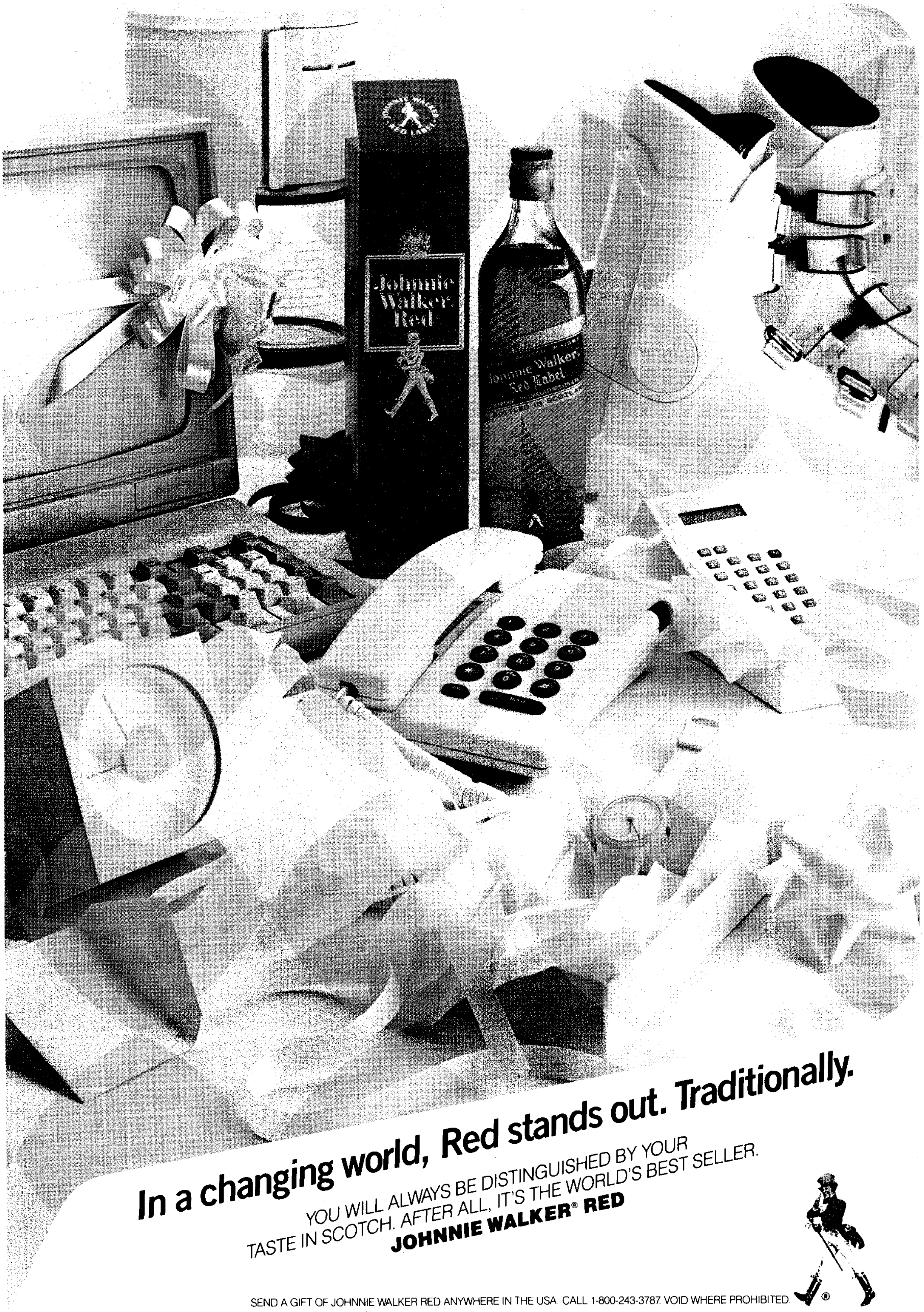
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lovers' tune; you can believe that she might have been happy with him, and that strengthens the importance of the mostly offscreen Old Granddaddy (Hurd Hatfield), who raised the girls and screwed up their lives.

The movie has a bad opening: the first scene, in which Lenny picks up Babe's things at the mansion where she shot her husband and carts them back to the MaGrath house, does more to dislocate us than to give us our bearings. And when we get our first view of the MaGrath place it's perhaps more architecturally pixillated than seems appropriate to the emptiness of the sisters' lives there. But though the moviemakers' efforts to make the play "visual" fail, the actresses give it their vitality. And they avoid the danger in Beth Henley's material—the trap that "Nobody's Fool," which is based on Henley's autobiographical script, falls into. At her worst, Henley turns the heartbreak and boringness of small-town life into cute tics. In "Nobody's Fool," the young heroine (Rosanna Arquette) behaves as if she were brain-damaged, but we're supposed to take her sickly romantic carrying on as an indication that she's going to become an artist. The picture dotes on her; it swoons over her while we in the audience stare numbly. "Crimes of the Heart" has some of the same mixture of looniness and lyricism, but the actresses are smart and generous and inspired. So the three women's looniness really is lyric. Lenny's *hysteria* is lyric. It's as if the three actresses said to the director and the rest of the cast, "Just back off, and let us become sisters." And they became sisters.

"The Decline of the American Empire," written and directed by Denys Arcand, a veteran French-Canadian moviemaker, none of whose other films have been released here, is smooth and harmonious. It has an up-to-the-minute melancholy high chic, but that's also what this comedy is about, and if it leaves a viewer with mixed reactions, that may be an appropriate response, because Arcand himself has mixed emotions about what he shows us. His subject is sex in a period of social change, without the binding ties of family and religion, without sacrifice for the community or strong commitments to the future. It's sex in a period when people—aging middle-class intellectuals, at least—no longer believe in postponing pleasure. The eight principal characters—four men and four women connected with the History Department of a Montreal university—belong to a new, loose form of extended family, which includes spouses, lovers, and co-workers. On this Friday afternoon in autumn, the women, who need to keep in shape in order to appeal to men, work out together at a gym in the city while the men, gathered at a lakeside cottage, prepare trout coulibiac for a festive dinner. Both groups talk about sex, and when they're together in the long evening they go on talking about sex, but more discreetly—with less bravura.

There is only one married couple in this intellectual fellowship: slender, fastidious Louise (Dorothée Berryman), who looks like the stunning Parisiennes in old French movies and is the most conventional of the women, has been married to the pudgy, affable professor Rémy (Rémy Girard) for fifteen years. At the gym, Louise (who isn't an academic) talks about her husband as if he were a comfortable, faithful Teddy bear. Her unmarried companions—a prof, an assistant prof, and a graduate student—listen politely, though two of them know she's deceiving herself, because they've both had affairs with him. Meanwhile, the highly sexed Rémy, drinking wine and puttering about in the kitchen of the cottage (it belongs to him and Louise), is the most spirited of the conversationalists there. He may lie constantly to Louise, but he doesn't seem to lie much to himself or his friends; he's a man who lives to philander, and though the men aren't great wits (nor are they meant to be), he's very funny about his monomania.

Rémy and his buddies raise the kind of blustering questions that heterosexual men talking about sex are very likely to raise. Why do men have to go through so much hell on the dance floor, trying to come up with the right conversational inanities? Why are homosexuals so much better-looking than *they* are—or, rather, why do so many good-looking men turn out to be homosexual? They point to Claude (Yves Jacques), an art-history prof—a handsome homosexual member of the group, who, like the women, keeps himself in good shape, though he's rather listless. (Claude is perfectly convincing when he says, "The only time I feel alive is when I'm cruising.") The conversation is bawdy and enjoyable. And though Rémy is the sort of cheerful seducer that movies generally expose as spiritually empty, he doesn't appear to be a bad

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guy. Arcand seems to be saying, "This is how some men are. I'm not giving Rémy a vote of confidence, but I'm not putting him down, either. I'm simply saying, 'Let's get a truthful look at each other.' " And maybe he's also saying that men like Rémy and Claude aren't just led around by their sex organs—that it's their romantic imagination, their sense of possibilities, that leads them to take risks.

There are a great many crosscurrents in the story. Diane (Louise Portal), the assistant prof, feels that the early marriage she finally got out of was a setback to her career. (She cries "I'll never get tenure!" and it has a moaning echo—it's the tragedy of her life.) Diane is having a sadomasochistic relationship with a rough-guy drug dealer (Gabriel Arcand); he has covered her back with whip marks, which she displays at the gym as if they were jewels of sexual liberation. Her rough guy (this outsider is the ninth member of the cast) shows up at the cottage. And there's the pedantic Pierre (Pierre Curzi), a lazy-minded professor, who since his divorce has been lucky in his sex life: he has taken up with a beautiful graduate student (Geneviève Rioux), whom he met when she serviced him at a massage parlor.

Arcand slips in flashbacks without breaking the flow of talk or jostling the ravishing natural changes in the light at the lake. There's nothing weighty in his approach and nothing that he insists you look at. It may take a while to sort out the characters' interrelations, and those of us who are dependent on the subtitles may be a little perplexed by the nuances of the women's conversation at the gym. A couple of them rattle on amusingly, comparing the prowess of men of different nationalities around the globe, and it isn't quite clear when they're kidding and when they're boasting. But these are minor inconveniences. The film is structured like a concerto for nine instruments.

Its high point comes in an act of treachery at the cottage—a case of motiveless malignity (which doesn't mean that the perpetrator has no reason for his action but that the victims haven't consciously wronged him). Dominique (Dominique Michel) is the head of the History Department and the author of a new book, "Changing Concepts of Happiness," in which she enunciates the theory that gives the movie its misleading, ironic title—the theory that the satisfaction of personal

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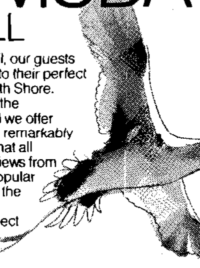
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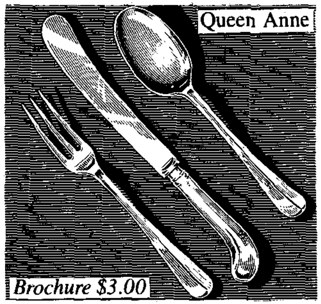
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desires becomes more important as a civilization declines. The oldest of the group, Dominique is one of the women present who have had affairs with Rémy, and, for no apparent reason beyond pique at Louise's smug conviction that the old values are intact, she mentions his adultery in front of the whole group, in very precise tones. Louise is stung and humiliated. A little later, when a young doctoral candidate, Alain (Daniel Brière), asks Dominique why she spoke up that way, she informs him—as if this answered his question—that Rémy has slept with hundreds of women, including Louise's own sister. And Louise, who overhears her, is destroyed.

That's the drama at the center of this talk film, and we understand that a subtle shift in all the relationships will now be necessary. We feel the foreground action and the flashbacks that have been providing the background begin to merge. Tennessee Williams is a touchstone for this movie, too, because in a Williams play Dominique's act would be regarded as deliberate cruelty, and hence a sin. Here her puncturing of Louise's pride and her betrayal of Rémy (which is perhaps her way of punishing men in general) are treated as part of the texture of modern promiscuity. Nobody is being judged—not even the American Empire is being judged. It's a very unassuming picture; it doesn't even suggest that imperial decline is such a bad thing.

Yet you feel a chill. The movie leaves you sad, chastened. The revelation that affects the brisk, brittle Louise comes in the evening, and, with the exception of Diane, who has left with her bruiser, the members of the group go off to their beds—Rémy with two sleeping pills, Pierre with his luscious masseuse, the tireless campaigner Dominique with her new conquest, Alain—and are all there in the morning. Louise spends the night weeping, held and comforted by Claude. It's as if she had just been forced to grow up and face what the other people there who have reached her age have come to know—that the old dreams won't hold.

The morning is calm, with Louise in dark glasses to hide her red eyes, and Rémy coming out of hiding, and their friends providing support. Louise has been deprived of her illusions, that's all. The others lost them, too, and they're having a good time—they're not suffering. But a viewer can't shake off the lonely feeling in the air.

—PAULINE KAEL

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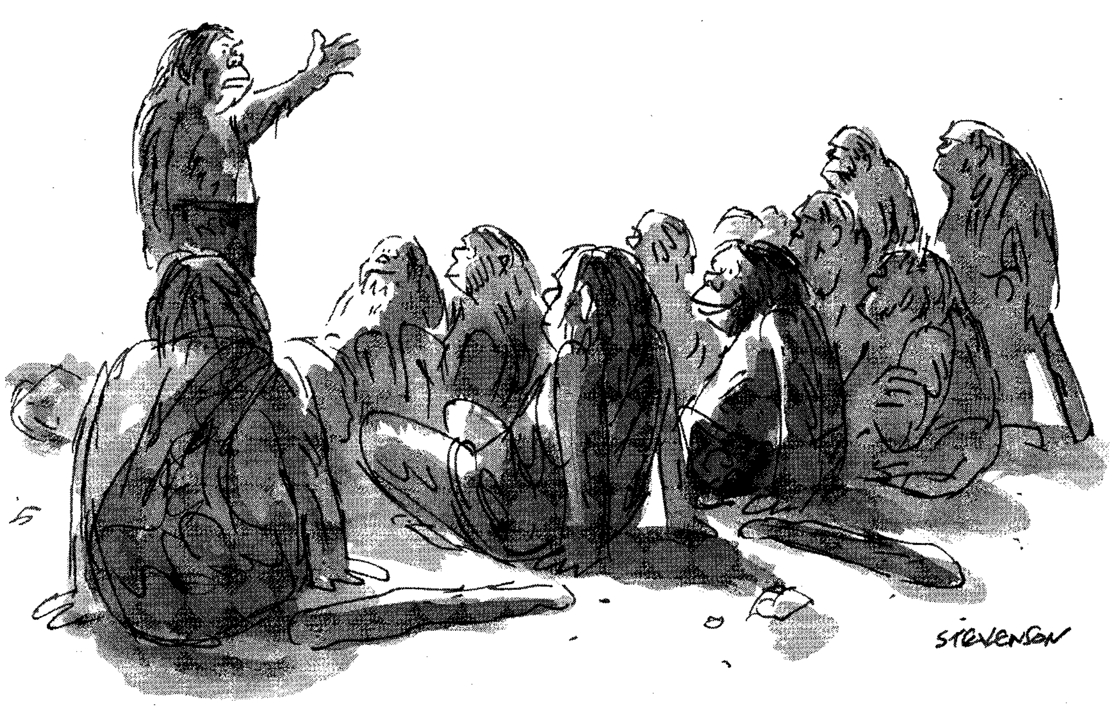
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR MEN

THE Cathedral of St. John the Divine, at 112th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, rises from the highest point on Manhattan Island. It is the largest Gothic cathedral in the world (the Statue of Liberty could stand upright in the central crossing), and it is unfinished. Like a complex physics equation strung across a classroom blackboard, scaffolding covers the exterior of the south tower and fills the interior of the north and south transepts; the elements of the equation might be termed perseverance, resources, artisanship, and faith. This is the centennial year of the decision to build a cathedral in the United States on the scale of the great churches of Europe (the scale of St. John the Divine outstrips those of Chartres and Westminster Abbey, and is bested only by that of St. Peter's in Rome). The cornerstone, though, was not laid until six years later, two days after Christmas—St. John's Day, 1892. Today, stone by stone, the building of the cathedral continues, and its North Field doubles as a stoneyard and a soccer field. All the stone is Indiana limestone, cut into blocks on the grounds of the cathedral by a giant red-blue-and-yellow machine (during the cutting process water is sprayed onto the stone and the saw blade to wash away the dust and cool the blade). Moldings are cut on the blocks by a crew of stonecutters, and then the stones are hauled across the field to the carving shed, where they are carved with images of angels and saints, beasts and birds, twining flowers and leaves, by local apprentices drawn from the cathedral's volatile, complicated neighborhood. The work is done under the guidance and direction of Master Carver Nicholas Fairplay, who at the age of sixteen apprenticed himself to the English guild of stone carvers, which is responsible for restoring the carvings that throughout England adorn the walls of cathedrals such as Canterbury and St. Paul's. He spent three years at Westminster Abbey. "I grew up in Chichester, in the south of England," Fairplay told us. "It's a medieval town—you have your market in the square—and you grow up with an amazing sense of what it's *supposed to look like and feel like.* Here you grow up with skyscrapers and Walt Disney. I am training six people now in how to carve—most have been here two years. It's really teaching them how to see. We begin with studying carving of the late thirteenth century; the higher the towers get, the later the period gets, but the point is not to do an exact copy but to develop a style through understanding."

Every stone is numbered, and it is possible to participate tangibly in the completion of the cathedral with a subscription of as little as $100 for a plainly dressed stone, called an ashlar. The name designated by the giver will be entered in the seventy-five-year-old Book of Remembrance (which lists, among others, the name of King George VI), and the recipient will receive a parchment certificate from the Bishop of New York, the Trustees, and the Dean of the Cathedral, commemorating the gift. (Other types of building stones include arch pier stones, with colonette jambs and rounded moldings, for a gift of $1,000 each, and cornerstones, or quoins, hand-finished on two or more faces, for a gift of $500.) A particularly pleasing feature of such a gift (in addition to its everlastingness, and the *certainty that it won't be relegated to* an attic) is that the amount of money paid out by the subscriber is not mentioned on the certificate, although the type of stone and its number are. The donor of a gargoyle, and/or the honoree, may be photographed—smiling or grimacing—with the gargoyle and the young man or woman responsible for carving it; the building stones may be ordered by calling the cathedral's development office, at 316-7488.



"He has a wonderful command of the language, doesn't he?"

THE bronze lampposts on the steps of the west front of the cathedral originally lit up the entrance of the old Pennsylvania Railroad station; in 1967, after the station was torn down, they were installed outside the cathedral at the suggestion of the Reverend Canon Edward West. For those who would like to continue their fond associations with now dismantled urban structures by bringing bits of them back to grace friends' or relatives' grounds or abodes, Lost City Arts,

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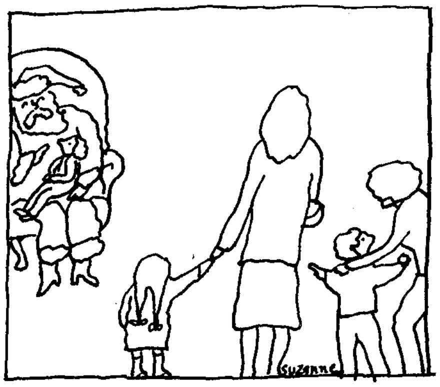
at 339 Bleecker Street (Christopher), can supply, among other examples, a salvaged four-by-five-foot copper architectural cornice, oxidized to a pale sea green, that was designed by Cass Gilbert in 1913 for the Woolworth Building. The price is $1,200, and James Elkind has put pieces of plate glass over other such finds—for instance, a polychromed plaster rosette (1919) from a bank, about two feet in diameter and two feet high; $325—and turned them into coffee tables. A two-foot-high Liberty head, circa 1890, in cast zinc, from the Liberty Warehouse in Brooklyn, is $3,200; and for a wood-and-cast-iron folding-seat chair, covered in red plush velvet, from the old Metropolitan Opera House, the price is $300; it seems to be surrounded by a slight, audible hum. Mr. Elkind has also tracked down a stableful of Mobil flying-red-horse signs of enamelled metal, from the early nineteen-thirties, any of which would lend an Edward Hopperesque tone to a front porch; a rare two-sided Pegasus is $1,200. A glossy navy-blue winged foot, the emblem of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, is five feet long and is outlined in white; the price is $650. Old-style New York City subway-route indicators, which were housed above the motorman's cab, and on which the names of the stops, in translucent white letters on scrolls of heavy black paper, were moved along by turning a knob, measure eighteen inches square and are $95 each; as we turned the knob on one, the stations, like billboards glowing in the dark seen through the window of a hurrying night train, silently fled by: TIMES SQUARE—GRAND CENTRAL—SPECIAL—NOT IN SERVICE.

Doorstops, like door knockers (a roaring lion's head, a good-luck horseshoe), are part of the symbology of a household; the man who uses a supine iron dachshund to keep his study door ajar would not willingly trade it for his neighbor's bust of Napoleon. At Leslie Eisenberg: Folk Art Gallery, 1187 Lexington Avenue (81st), the selection of Victorian and turn-of-the-century painted-iron doorstops includes a kimono-clad geisha strumming a ukulele, a mottled snapping turtle, and Punch (without Judy). According to his predilection, a man who has grown tired of piling books against the door might welcome one of these, and the prices are from $125 to $350. Cast-iron windmill weights, originally used for counterbalances or to govern uniform speed, date from the same era. In addition to barnyard horses, cattle, and crowing roosters, there is a crescent moon, with the word "ECLIPSE" spelled out along its inner curve; $375 to $2,000. Mrs. Eisenberg also has on hand a cast-iron shooting-gallery target. Made in about 1910, it consists of the almost life-size figures of a boy and a bear; when a hard-rubber ball—or an ashtray, for that matter—is thrown accurately, hitting the bear's belly, he opens his mouth and clamps down on the boy's head. The price is $2,500.

TESSARACT, an elegant mail-order concern (the address is Box 151, Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706), deals in early scientific objects, and also has in its array items relating to the variegations of men's heads. A pressed-fruitwood snuffbox lined with tortoiseshell, which dates from a hundred years before the ill-fated fellow and the rapacious bear, is three and a quarter inches in diameter, and carved into its lid is an intricate satire relating to the controversy over phrenology. Inscribed in the center are the words "Marche Comique du Doct'r Gall;" seven groups of figures traipse around the lid, among them two magicians wearing Merlin hats, and a dancing couple with hands placed strategically on each other's heads. The price is $950. Small objects from the deep past have an especially atavistic quality, because the very fact of their existence inspires wonderment that they were not somehow mislaid (as though the object had magical properties that kept it out of a succession of gulleys and drains), and because their size—fitting into a hand or a pocket—means intimate commerce with the past's daily round. As a case in point, Tessaract can provide a seventeenth-century miniature natural lodestone bound in scalloped sterling silver. Shaped like a cork, and measuring a scant seven-eighths of an inch high, it still exhibits discernible magnetic powers, and was once used to remagnetize the needles of small compasses and pocket sundials. The price is $1,450. Also proportioned to fit easily into the palm of a magnetic gentleman is a pocket globe, two and three-quarters inches in diameter, that was made in London around 1800; Cook's voyages are traced in the "Great South Sea," the words "Frozen Ocean" are printed at the North and South Poles, and the insides of the hemispherical covers show the full range of the constellations. The price is $850. For examining flora of near or exotic climes, an 1860s American brass microscope has a cast-iron base, is accompanied by six different oculars and objectives, and has held on to its original mahogany box; $1,600. A mahogany-and-brass spyglass, originally from the stores of the East India Company, dates from the mid-nineteenth century (when it emerged from one of the establishments of Elliott Brothers, in London, at 56 Strand and 5 Charing Cross), opens to thirty inches, and costs $395. Men whose sightings over the river and into the trees have convinced them of the necessity of constructing their own world from scratch might be encouraged in their endeavors by the gift of an 1870 French globemaker's apparatus, for measuring and marking on *boule*-size globes, five inches across. Included are a great-circle clamp ring and a 36°- 90°- 90° spherical triangle, both of silvered brass, and a boxwood arc with two lacquered-brass trammels, on one of which the needle point can be replaced with a pen or pencil holder. The price is $1,700.



The Garrett Wade Company, on the mezzanine at 161 Sixth Avenue (Spring Street; until Christmas, the closing time is five-thirty on Saturdays, after which it reverts to 3 P.M.), supplies tools for serious craftsmen whose present-day tasks range from replacing ceiling moldings in Park Slope to building facsimiles of Mount Vernon on Pennsylvania tracts. For simple jobs, and to keep in a pocket from which snails and the like have been evacuated, here is a stainless-steel combination pocketknife and folding six-inch precision ruler; it measures three inches by five-eighths inches closed, and the price is $25.25. What are called French-peasant folding knives have wooden handles and feel sturdy in the hand; a knife with a four-inch blade, useful for cutting down bunches of Chardonnay grapes, is $8.50. A number of men we are

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acquainted with have of late, in the silent moments when the table saw is turned off, been extolling the virtues of the Japanese hand-held tools sold under the name of Shokunin. An introductory boxed set of six cabinetmaker's laminated-steel bevelled-edge butt chisels, ranging in blade width from six to twenty-four millimetres, costs $88.90, and very sharp Japanese gimlets, which one uses by rolling the wood handle between one's palms or else screwdriver fashion, to make a quick hole without banging, are $7.95 for a set of three (double-spur gimlet, taper-triangle tip, and square tip). Japanese saws, in contrast to Western models, cut on the inward pull rather than the outward push—a scheme that makes for greater control and eliminates bowing. The Master Craftsman Dozuki saw is handmade and is shaped like a cleaver, and the cutting edge has twenty-eight teeth per inch; $129.50. A single-sided Ryoba saw, also called a Kataba, comes in two versions: a seventeen-teeth-per-inch crosscut ($74.80), and a seven-teeth-per-inch ripsaw ($68.90). (The single-side design means that the saw has teeth on only one edge, whereas the traditional Japanese models have both upper and lower teeth; the elimination of the second row prevents the noncutting edge from inadvertently scoring the kerf.) Natural Japanese waterstones from a quarry north of Kyoto (where waterstones have been mined for over a thousand years), for honing blades, are $69.95, and camellia oil, to keep blades from rusting (it was also used in the past by Japanese women to dress and scent their hair), comes in a three-ounce bottle with a felt-tip applicator and costs $13.90. This year, Garrett Wade has introduced to its happy constituency two new versions of the Norris-Style Cabinetmaker's Long-Bed Finishing Plane. These planes are gratifyingly heavy (seven to nine pounds), are handmade of traditional materials—solid steel, brass, and mahogany—and come with three-sixteenth- and one-eighth-inch-thick blades as standard. We are told that the planes have not been readily available for fifty years except at prices affordable only by collectors; the price is $243.40 for the fore plane and $259.30 for the jointer.

A MAN whose last act of manual labor was the deft tying of a bow tie but who admires the craftwork of others might be given an inlaid box by Thomas Davin and Mary Kesler, available at International Barn, 2287 Broadway (82nd). Silkily incorporating purple-heart walnut, Hawaiian koa wood, and padauk, the box is velvet-lined, measures three by seven inches, and is five inches deep; it costs $80, and would be fine for holding cufflinks and studs. Here are also boxes by Bolstad Woodworks. Seven-by-twelve-inch walnut boxes have lids of either umber zebrawood or reddish bubinga; a removable walnut fitting divides the box into four compartments. The price is $105. A firm called Santa Fe Stoneworks has transformed pieces of cocobolo wood from the Philippines by dressing them up with silver or brass inlays enclosing turquoise, malachite, red jasper, or onyx—to list only a few—and has sent them east to work as letter openers and pocketknives. They can be had for $23.95 and $29.50, respectively. The pocketknives look sturdy enough to score a clementine, but beauty and convenience, rather than tough functioning, are their obvious, and achieved, aims.

The raison d'être of every item residing in the sleek stateroom of the Museum of Modern Art gift shop is that it either has been consciously designed to correspond with modernist anti-gewgaw tenets or somehow fits into those tenets by chance. (An example of the latter is a set of three graceful scissors such as have been manufactured in China since the seventeenth century—the elliptical handles slim, the blades and bright screw putting one in mind of a flying crane. The price is $16.) Having made it under the museum's limbo stick by combining the two aspects is writing paper handmade from straw; before its potential was grasped by the designer Marco Baldini, such paper was originally used in Italy by butchers to wrap meat. The paper, it is noted, is "air-dried," and the price of twenty sheets and ten envelopes is $17. We also found ourself admiring—as the museum does, with many items of his manufacture on sale here—a Bauhaus chess set produced by Kurt Naef, in Switzerland. (The set was thought up by Josef Hartwig in 1923.) Instead of following the traditional designs (crowns, crenellations, rearing steeds), the shapes of the pieces, which are of wood, are determined by their respective movements: the bishop is in the shape of two crossing diagonals, the pawn is a diminutive, undemanding square, and the queen is an omnipotent sphere on a pedestal. The set of pieces is $125; the board, which is sold separately, is $45. The Naef factory is also the origin of two puzzles, both of which address forces of nature that are greater than the forces of man, and both of which, placed to advantage on a desk top, might be contemplated during decisions involving causes and effects. In the volcano puzzle, which measures six and a quarter inches square (the depth is one inch), black shifting sands, in complex juxtaposition with water under clear plastic, form molehills and then mountains, until the sand erupts in spouts; $40. A Nevada Sand Puzzle shows the formation of dunes as channelled sand flows into regulated chambers; $30.

Events have, it is said, a way of sneaking up. Christmas certainly has this quality; and other circumstances, such as finding oneself in a career other than that of cowboy or lion tamer, may cause a man to puzzle over how he happened to arrive where he is. A friend of long acquaintance is fond of stating the belief that one is simply born aboard a particular ocean liner and spends one's life sailing around on it. The thought serves as, wandering around the city, we bump time and time again into someone's sister's husband's aunt, galvanized by now into her own search for suitable Christmas presents. Madison Avenue is the upper deck of our particular promenade, and, strolling there one recent morning, we found ourself gazing through plate glass at that most traditional of visual puzzles: the ship captured inside a bottle. This particular vessel was reclining on green baize at the San Francisco Ship Model Gallery, 1089 Madison Avenue (82nd). The ships in bottles here (the craft include the Rotterdam, the U.S.S. Eagle, and the Charlotte) range in price from $95 to $600, depending on artist and complexity; bottle length is from

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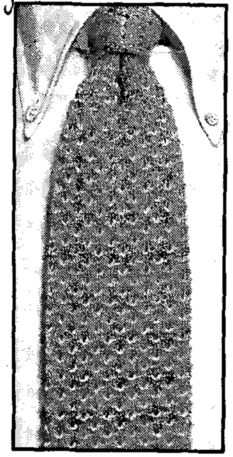

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seven to ten inches. In addition to its ship models, most of them unbottled (and the in-house craftsman, Irving Schneider, will repair old models that have lost a gunwale or two during their off-duty stint), the gallery also has silver candy dishes that were once scattered in the dining rooms of the liners R.M.S. Carinthia and R.M.S. Berengaria. The Carinthia dish has a filigree crest; the other has a lead-crystal bowl, with a design at its bottom of sea grapes and drowned leaves, on a silver plate. The dishes are $100 and $125, respectively.

Unfettered adventurers, or those with a full complement of fetters but mad to get away to the high seas, might be given, as a mode of transportation, a folding Klepper kayak, similar to the model in which Dr. Hannes Lindemann, in 1956, sailed and paddled across the Atlantic, on a trip taking seventy-two days. The folding kayak was invented in 1907 by Johan Klepper, who was tired of being thwarted by Bavarian railroad authorities when he tried to take his boat on board, and it can be easily assembled ("Ha!" we said, but someone who should know told us that this is indeed true) by anyone in fifteen minutes. It incorporates thirty-one handmade pieces (not all of which, thank goodness, come apart), of mountain ash and laminated Finnish birch; the deck is salt-water-resistant canvas; and the hull is tough, fabric-reinforced Hypalon rubber. Because the center of gravity is well below the waterline, the kayak is almost impossible to capsize, but it is equipped with permanently inflated air bladders, so that if by some act of God it does fill up with water it won't sink. Folded, it fits into two golf-bag-size duffelbags (loaded, they weigh forty pounds each), and the popular Aerius II model, which has been taken down the Nile and the Colorado River rapids as well as across the Atlantic, can also serve very well for placid voyages down millstreams and on lakes. It seats two, and the price is $1,800, which includes two paddles. There is also an attachable mainsail and jib rig (the sail package is $620), and, for those whose love of the high seas does not encompass drenching spray, Klepper headquarters, at 35 Union Square West, sells three spray covers—standard ($165) and expedition and arctic (each $220). On sale here as well is a book, by Elinor B. Nickerson, called "Kayaks to the Arctic" (Howell-North; $8.95), a record of the quality time the

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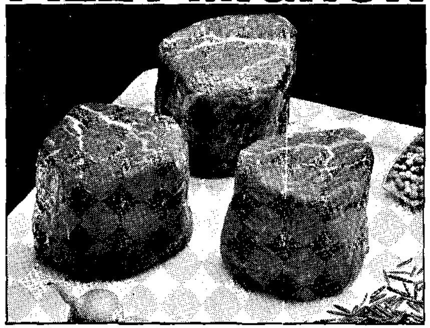

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Nickerson family of five spent together while taking three kayaks down the Mackenzie River in northern Canada, to its mouth, on the Arctic Ocean. Those with more modest dreams might look over “Exploring the Little Rivers of New Jersey,” by James and Margaret Cawley (Rutgers; $7.95). It includes maps of the Pine Barrens waters. Any visitor to Klepper who is planning to take a trip of any duration will be urged to first cool his jets and settle down with a reading list; this includes an article from the magazine *Alaska* for August, 1976, entitled “Parachute Drops on Kandik River” and summarized as “Kleppers, parachuted,” and one from the No. 6 issue of the magazine *Oceans*, entitled “Rocks, Ice, and White Whales,” by Larry Rice, which is “about a kayak trip to Baffin Island with Mrs. Rice.” Anyone considering putting a folded kayak under the tree is thus forewarned; as a possibly less demanding alternative, a subscription to the magazine *WoodenBoat* can be ordered by sending $18 to P.O. Box 956, Farmingdale, New York 11737.

With both feet back on terra firma but our romance with the sea not yet ended, we sat down for a moment on a bench in Central Park near Hans Christian Andersen’s knee and admired the radio-operated boats serenely luffing in the Conservatory Pond. The scene is like one painted by Prendergast: the gnarled gentlemen in their boating caps, the wide-eyed, dressed-up children enchanted by the white sails, their nannies gazing at some point over their heads. Similar model boats can be bought from Jan’s Hobby Shop, at 1431A York Avenue (76th), where they are enthusiastically presided over by Fred Hutchins. Though smaller than the folding kayaks, most of the models here take longer to put together (the average assembly time is about two hours), and Mr. Hutchins, the Gulliver serving as harbormaster of this Lilliput, can supply for fair or foul weather conditions small craft priced from $75 to $1,000. Under radio control, the boats have a half-mile range, and thus can be called back from open bodies of water such as lakes and inlets (though one might leave Frobisher Bay alone). The five-foot-long two-masted, gaff-rigged schooner Atlantis, by Robbe, is constructed of sturdy plastic, and the basic $400 kit includes (besides the hull, masts, booms, and shrouds) fourteen hundred square inches of nylon sails and a tiny wheelhouse. To fit her out for luxury cruising, one adds exotic-wood planking ($50), brass fittings ($65), a ballasted metal keel ($50), and a two-channel radio control ($100). With a five-channel radio ($200), her owner can navigate using a three-bladed propeller engine ($65), on days when the wind is recalcitrant. Men born in this city often retain their affection for tugboats, and might prefer to a miniature yacht a two-foot-long harbor tug named Neptune. It is seven inches high from the waterline, its deck is two feet long, and it is equipped with an anchor, an anchor winch, and the necessary towing components; $300. In place of battery-powered electric motors, all the boats can be outfitted with working steam engines. They, too, have to be assembled, and their prices start at $65.

FOR men who have no wish to extend their watery excursions any farther than their morning ablutions, Crabtree & Evelyn, whose storefronts have sprouted like primroses all over the city, including an optimistic, keep-your-chin-up site at the unlikely dell of Broadway and 107th Street,

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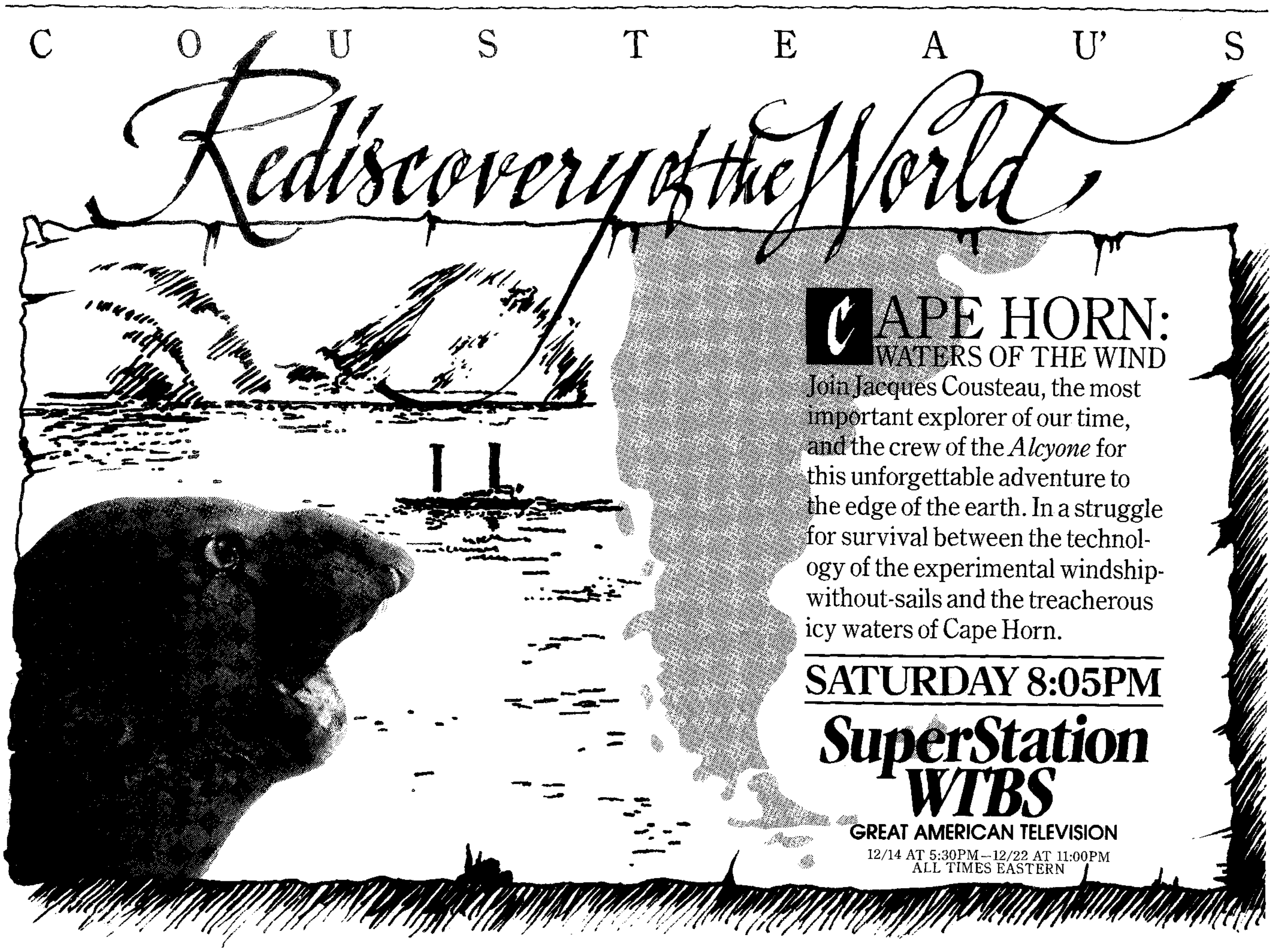
is the place to pick up a natural-bristle-and-rosewood back-scrubber bath brush ($26) and, on a rope, a cake of almond-oil soap from England ($6.50). Some triple-milled meal soaps, in boxes of three cakes each, include maize or oatmeal, and purportedly deep-clean and stimulate the skin without leaving behind any flowery scent. The price is $7.50 per box. Here, too, is a stock of loofah sponges; the loofah, as Crabtree & Evelyn obligingly explains, "is the skeletal frame of the Sponge Gourd, or Luffah cylindrical." A loofah bath mitt with cuff (it looks like an animated mitten) is $4.25, and plain sponges are from $2.25 to $3, depending on size. A strap of webbing onto which the leafy fibres of the aloe plant have been stitched has a handle at each end and is designed for wet or dry massage, the admirable intent being to induce in the scrubber a relaxation of tensions and a relieved spirit; $22. There is a small group of men, almost a club, which continues to find modern shaving techniques anathema; to fill the medicine chests of this anachronistic lot, Crabtree & Evelyn has trim tortoiseshell-handled shaving brushes, for $18.50. A wooden bowl of sandalwood shaving soap is $9, and a tiny mustache comb is $2.

Henri Bendel, dispensers nonpareil of beauty enhancers for the female sex, can now supply some, from Amy Greene's Beauty Checkers, that might be employed by the improvable male as well. Facial-cleansing gelée made of such rough-and-ready extracts as Irish moss and chlorophyll is $6.50, and a vitamin-E stick is $6. Bendel, in its indefatigable search for the rarefied, has discovered a monk in the Abbazia di Praglia, near Venice, who has been busying himself making skin cream out of bee pollen. The price is $10 for a thirty-millilitre tube, and the Brother has also come up with a camomile shampoo and a carotene conditioner, at $6 for eight ounces of either one. The denizens of Our Lady of the Resurrection Priory, in Cold Spring, New York, have not been idle, either, and thence comes "From a Monastery Kitchen: A Practical Cookbook of Vegetarian Recipes for the Four Seasons Complete from Soups to Desserts with Breads" (Harper & Row; $9.95), compiled by Elise Boulding, with the assistance of Brother Victor Antonio Avila and Sister Jeanne-Marie Pearse, and designed and illustrated by Daniel Marshall. Recipes include Oatmeal Croquettes (winter), Cloister Carrots (summer), and Pentecost Cream (spring); the book espouses the philosophy that a little goes a long way, and it might be given to a man whose duties by choice or circumstances include not only preparing the evening meal but also getting up at a monkish hour with the children. The text is festooned with a kitchen-garden variety of quotations, such as "Bread is a relief for all kinds of grief" (Spanish proverb) and "Marriage is our last, best chance to grow up" (Joseph Barth, Minister, King's Chapel, Boston). The book may be found at the Scriptorium, 787 Seventh Avenue (51st), in the Equitable Tower, and the proceeds of its sale, and other sales here, go to support the activities of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

A woman with access to a man's bureau drawers might like, in exchange for making off with a roomy sweater, to tuck into the heel of a Christmas stocking a hand-carved terra-cotta pomander ball filled with amber crystals. Such balls, made by Jean Laporte, are on sale at Bendel. They uncannily resemble intricately bevelled wood, and give off a pleasant low-key scent. The price is $28 for a pomander two inches in diameter, and $95 for a five-inch one. Brass turn-of-the-century letter racks, some with "LETTERS" spelled out on the front, or decorated with jockeys, could keep invitations and exhortations from cluttering up the hall table. They are priced from $180 to $300, and turn-of-the-century brass picture frames are from $60 to $300. For events in which the subject being observed is not oneself or one's loved ones, Bendel's forward-looking Lee Bailey shop stocks a pair of funny, efficient glasses, whose lenses are 2.8 x 28 binoculars. They eliminate the tiring task of holding binoculars up to one's eyes, and the price is $55.

IT was mentioned in these pages during the summer that a young man—a curator at the National Gallery in Washington—was so taken with the image of the man in blue-and-white striped pajamas standing on the left in Matisse's painting "Conversation" that he went out and searched the Capital for a pair just like them. A man similarly impressed but desirous that the parallel seem suavely offhand might be outfitted with a blue-and-white striped nightshirt to be found at Banbury Cross, 198 Columbus Avenue (69th). It was designed by Derek Rose, of England, whose white cottons may also be striped with rose, green, yellow, or grenadine. The nightshirts are $65, and white-on-white or black-on-black striped cotton pajamas are $95. Here, too, are racks of country-squire haberdashery to be worn while stomping around outside. The Italian firm of Henry Cotton, whose aim is to bring a bit of Continental spit and polish to such clothes, is represented here by a citified yellow rain slicker, its upper regions lined with an urbane gray-and-ochre wool tartan. The slicker reaches to mid-thigh, has three outer pockets, and is further jazzed up by a fir-green corduroy collar; $345. Henry Cotton has illuminated Black Watch plaid by making what are traditionally its dark-navy panes a vivid cobalt blue, for a fisherman-style jacket. The jacket has a fawn suède collar, leather buttons, and a diamond-pattern quilted lining; the price is $425. Also addressing the problem of rainy days is a full-length "water-repellent" (which may be interpreted as "not waterproof," and thus suitable for drizzles but not monsoons) coat of olive-drab with that softness of hue that we have learned to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call stone-washed. It has a tan canvas collar (this year, a contrasting collar is the signal flag of a garment's independent spirit), a lumberjack-style black-and-red-plaid lining, and the firemen's metal closures that are so endearing when used on children's rain boots; made by a company called Lakeland, and priced at $235. Scarves in British public-school, college, and boating-club stripes are six feet long and cost $29.50 each. And gloves, also from England, cost from $45 to $75: piled high in a basket, they look like downed oak leaves; of kid or calfskin, caramel, chocolate, espresso, or black, they are lined with pile, chamois, or cashmere. Also at Banbury Cross is a heavy blue denim shirt, with, we note, a beige pinwale-corduroy collar, by Ruff Hewn, a firm that takes its name, according to the attached tag, from a man named Barclay Ruffin Hewn, who was commissioned by Theodore Roosevelt to design the uniform for the Boy Scouts. The shirt is $65.

Frank Stella, at 440 Columbus Avenue (81st), diagonally across from the Theodore Roosevelt Park at the American Museum of Natural History, is named not for the artist but for the given names of Mr. and Mrs. Jedda, the proprietors. Nevertheless, the store has designed some artful cotton shirts: a turquoise one has a lemon-and-goldenrod windowpane plaid, and a navy one has a similar plaid of yellow and teal. Michael Stein, designing for Trekka, has come up with a shirt in a diminutive black-and-white Glen plaid with an overlay plaid in crayon-box primary hues. Cotton-flannel shirts here range from $30 to $60, and cotton-broadcloth shirts are $50 to $60. Vests that would lend insouciance to the holiday table after the second hour or so, when one's jacket has been removed, have been knitted in Scotland for Frank Stella and sport an intarsia design of what will seem to resemble Christmas ornaments on that festive occasion but will look like circles in cross-stitch when the Christmas merriment retreats. The colors are Wallis blue and bark, with accents of red carnation, Christmas green, and snow, and the price is $80. Here, too, are some seeing-some-one-off-at-the-station fedoras, from Christys' of London; $65. They are charcoal gray, olive, or tan, and the wearer's younger brother might be persuaded to save his neck from the winter winds with a hand-loomed scarf by Fern Devlin, who, to alluring effect, weaves together cotton and silk dyed the shady colors of moss and stones. The occasional silver thread looks like a vein of mica, and the scarves are $110. Frank Stella is also the venue of some very appealing leather jackets. One, in brown or Veronese-green suède, has leather on the yoke and pockets. Lined with biscuit flannel printed with mallard ducks, the jacket is $525; a three-quarter-length version with zip-in shearling collar is $650.

MICHAEL ROSENBERG'S grandmother Bert Levy is the inspiration behind his spick-and-span store Granny-Made, which opened this September at 381 Amsterdam Avenue (79th). Mrs. Levy's cable designs, accommodated to hand-run knitting machines, favor youthfully relaxed shoulders; they have dolman sleeves, and have been dyed up-to-the-minute shades: iris, mauve, claret, taxicab yellow, and ultramarine. Most of the sweaters have a full array of cables, and are available in wool or substantial cotton yarn (the cotton here—which is, in fact, more expensive than the wool—has the best weight of any that has lately passed through our hands, wooing us from our prejudice against the vogue for cotton sweaters, most of which have a frowzy, Johnny-come-lately look about them), and the prices are, respectively, $110 or $120 for an ample V-neck cardigan and $92 or $106 for a turtleneck. Prices for a polo-shirt style, without cables, are $90 and $96. Sturdy, engaging, leather-trimmed gloves are beige, black, or gray knitted wool, lined with fleece. They snap at the wrist, and are made by a company called Mise en Scene; $15. The same firm has produced "ambidextrous" striped wool gloves, at $12 a pair. (They can be worn on either hand, and the stripes' colors reverse on the flip sides.) In a clear plastic box marked with the name "Marianne Moore: Materials" are handwoven cotton scarves, in natural, red, or salt-and-pepper. The scarves are five feet long and eight inches wide, they cost $42 each, and the only relation we have discovered between the scarves bearing the name of this Miss Moore and the works of the Miss Moore with whom we are more familiar is the intricacy and tightness of the weave.

Judith Shahn

Many limber young women have found that items of clothing carrying the label Agnes B., once they have been welcomed into the closet, quickly come to seem like old friends; upstairs at 1063 Madison Avenue (80th), Agnes B. has an airy room in which, on racks ranged around the walls, hangs handsome garb for men. Inviting brushed-cotton shirts with Windsor collars come in Campari, granite, French blue, mustard, and lavender ($69); subtle, unwoodsy checked shirts of cotton flannel are black and green, black and white, or slate and black ($80); crisp cotton shirts that feel like linen are $67, and their colors include lemon ice. Agnes B. has also designed ties that manage to circumvent the dull without sliding into the ditch of the weird. De-luxe silk paisley brocade that does not immediately bring to mind the late-lamented slipcover of the old chaise longue is $40, and that difficult proposition, star motifs, is pulled off—perhaps because the stars are small—in such a way that the man wearing the tie will not look as though he were playing co-star to his neckwear. The choice includes gold with royal-blue stars, and the price is $40. Scottish cashmere sweaters (pale blue, viridian, and cream) are $330, and a thick-ribbed wool crew-neck sweater in a tweedy black-and-midnight-blue yarn is $168.

Another source of clothing for those legions of men who seem as if they didn't give much thought to what they wear but actually harbor very precise ideas (and usually not only about clothes) is the Patagonia catalogue (P.O. Box 86, Ventura, California 93002), which this year wins hands down our private, informal competition not only for irresistible graphics but for readability. The tone is that of a hospitable host or hostess of a ski lodge urging warm, functional clothing from the house's bountiful supply onto the backs of impractical weekend guests. The implicit message is that Patagonia garments are conducive to a robust life, and while it is, of course, perfectly possible to chop down the Christmas tree, trek in Bhutan, or mountain-climb in Antarctica (just three of the activities that the people at

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Patagonia have tried out while snug in their own garments of Synchilla, a fabric described as "immensely soft next to the skin . . . will gratify most animal instincts") in one's old, outmoded down jacket, Patagonia's happy colors and friendly rhetoric are no trifling thing—especially in a season of less spirited trifles—and the clothes are uniformly comfortable, well made, and often innovative. Patagonia also represents a new toleration among ecological-minded outdoor types for synthetic materials, resulting, perhaps, from a decade or so of hand-washing wool sweaters that can't be thrown into the machine after hard traffic with organic mud. A Taslan nylon jacket (which is nylon billed as looking like cotton) is lined with Synchilla, and is pictured in one of Patagonia's "real people" photographs as warm enough to protect a fellow while he is clearing snow off the deck of a commercial fishing boat in Squalicum Harbor, Washington; the colors available include black lined with cobalt, and dark peacock lined with navy; it's $94.50. A Synchilla envelope ski hat, which would be welcomed by a man who is allergic to wool, is $16.50. The enterprising futures buyer might do well to investigate the long-underwear market. This year, polypropylene, so recently fêted, is passé (a drawback of polypropylene is that it tends to melt in the clothes dryer), and the reigning stuff is Capilene polyester, which has a greater "wicking" ability: moisture spreads along the outer fibres until it evaporates. Expedition-weight Capilene underwear (gray, red, or navy) is $38.50 for the tops, and $29.50 for the bottoms, which have ribbed cuffs; extra-long tops are $40 and extra-long bottoms are $31.50 (both only in navy). Patagonia also makes shirts intended for ordinary, daily wear. Fine-point cotton canvas shirts have two button-through pockets, pleated backs, and top-stitching, and the colors include kingfisher and indigo; the buttons are a mottled natural color, resembling horn, and the price is $36.50. Cotton cambric shirts with tiny brass snap closures are $38.50 in French blue, khaki, or faded red, and cotton flannel in weather-beaten gray, light blue, or phlox lavender has a muted herringbone pattern; $36.

Instead of a week next summer in Menemsha, one might spend a comparable sum this Christmas for one of the extravagant, beautiful woollens designed by Missoni, 836 Madison Avenue (69th), a company whose luminous sweaters are knitted with patterns that undulate and resolve like scenes set into stained glass. On a cardigan, striking reedy bands of green are bordered with teal and interspersed with bands the color of red clay, flecked with copper and gentian; on a lighter-weight pullover, leaping greyhounds, which also look like frost-encased tree branches, run across a rocky field dusted with snow. The sweaters range from $460 to $1,000. Plaid cotton ties combine the clear tints (orange, green, and blue) of a bottle of San Pellegrino water and cost $45, and printed silk ties are colored with shades from Morandi's palette—slate, violet, and Naples yellow—and cost $52.

The Hackett shop at Bergdorf Goodman and its communicating compartment, the Turnbull & Asser shop, are stocked with the goods of the stores that thrive in London under those names, and they are taking hesitant American men in hand and giving them an introduction to British tailoring and haberdashery. Contrary to rumor, Hackett in London is unvenerable, being a scant five years old, but it has quickly grown out of its collection of vintage clothing gleaned from rummaging around in the antique markets of Portobello and has begun designing clothing on its own. A three-quarter-length navy covert-cloth Chesterfield coat has two hacking-style pockets and a right-hand ticket pocket, for $900; and a gray herringbone-tweed suit has a three-button jacket with four interior pockets, and tapered, pleated-front, button-fly trousers with one-and-five-eighths-inch turnups (the waistband has side tabs and suspender buttons), for $825. Cotton-piqué-front evening shirts arrive with two detachable collars (pointed and wing), and command an outlay of $115; untied silk bow ties—ivory polka dots on navy, red, or old hock—are $35. To carry all this away, pieces of bloodhound-colored vintage luggage are stacked expectantly around the Hackett shop; a trapezoidal box lined with quilted raspberry satin is the most fascinating of these—it turns out to be a top-hat box. The initials G.A.S. are stencilled on the side; the box locks shut, protecting its treasure; and Hackett can also provide an antique fur-felt top hat, from the Edinburgh hatters Cunningham & Co. Box and hat are, severally, $275. And here is a piece of baggage that has been around, if one is to take at face value the various stickers puckering on its weary lid: Hôtel Astor, Paris; Baglioni Palace Hotel, Firenze; and the Atlanta, Bruxelles. It is a satchel, lined with red-and-blue canvas tattersall, and its price is $570. Colorful golf umbrellas sighted through the proscenium at Turnbull & Asser look like rows of April gladioli. Open, they are roomy enough to shelter two during rainy assignations, and the choices include one with panels of ivory, violet, and green. The umbrellas are $70 each. For soup-and-fish evenings following romantic afternoons, a Turnbull & Asser white silk moiré bow tie ($32) and matching cummerbund ($70) might be paired with Hackett's evening shirt. Also for $70, there is a Christmassy-red cummerbund, and, "not as interesting but just as important" (as Joseph Anteé, our amiable guide, pointed out), are black silk socks, at $32 a pair. Mr. Anteé also directed our attention to Turnbull & Asser's cologne, which comes in a frosted-glass bottle in a hinged tortoiseshell-look box. "I'm from the South, and it makes me think of pink lemonade," he told us. The scent is indeed lemony, the tint is flush pink, and the price is $55 for 4.2 ounces.

CHARLOTTE MOSS, 131 East 70th Street, has a collection of slim volumes from a series called "Britain in Pictures," most of them published by William Collins & Sons between 1920 and 1940. All of them would fit in easily on the library shelves between bound volumes on animal husbandry and odd works of Richard Aldington. The book titled "British Clubs," written by Darwin's grandson Bernard, begins, " 'Boswell,' said Dr. Johnson, 'is a very clubbable man.' This is not the highest possible compliment that could be paid to a human being." Others in the series include "English Letter Writers," "Wildflowers," and "English Women," by Edith Sitwell, which begins, "The distinguishing quality of the English is character, not intellect." The books are $15 to $25 apiece. Here, too, in a bin of sundry prints and portraits, is a hand-colored engraving captioned "The Fortunate Duellist." In the foreground is a man wearing a striped jersey, plus fours, and a tricorne, posing triumphantly with a firearm; an inset picture reveals a scene from this victorious gentleman's past, during which he practiced shooting at a barber's wooden-block practice head. The price of the print, matted but unframed, is $50.

Retracing our steps to Fifty-seventh Street, we arrived at the Theodore Donson gallery, on the third floor at No. 24 West, where, with the assistance of Mr. Donson's able associate director, Marvel Griepp, we examined a portion of Mr. Donson's estimable collection of etchings and prints. A 1592 pair of engravings by Crispin de Passe de Oude called "A Woman and a Fool" and "A Gentleman and a Fool" may be had for the sum of $950, and there is also an unusual, sinuous representation of a mysterious group of objects: a muff, a kerchief, and a mask. It dates from 1642, and is by the Czech draftsman Wenzel Hollar; $850. Tiepolo's 1753 "Flight Into Egypt" series of etchings is represented by "Mary, Helped by Two Angels, Follows Joseph with the Donkey," at $1,450. And thrilling to hold in one's hand—and how much more so to imagine on a friend's wall—is an etching printed by Rembrandt himself, circa 1634, called "Two Tramps, a Man and a Woman." The price is $4,500, and the visage of the artist himself, in his prosperous period, is on view in "Self-Portrait with Saskia;" $18,000. A pleasing simple pencil drawing by Maillol, which somehow imprints itself on the mind, served as a sketch for a woodcut illustrating the story of Daphnis and Chloe; the scene depicted is described: "Syrinx, pursued by Pan, throws herself into a bog and disappears in the reeds." The drawing is $1,150. On the morning we visited the gallery, the walls were hung with an exhibit of Fernand Léger's graphics; subjects from the exuberant Cirque lithograph series—including "Big Julie," "The Three Musicians," and various playing cards—range from $450 to $850. A copy from the limited edition of "Fernand Léger: The Complete Graphic Works," by Lawrence Saphire, published by Blue Moon, is $175, and the gallery also has on sale an assortment of its own publications, beautifully printed and

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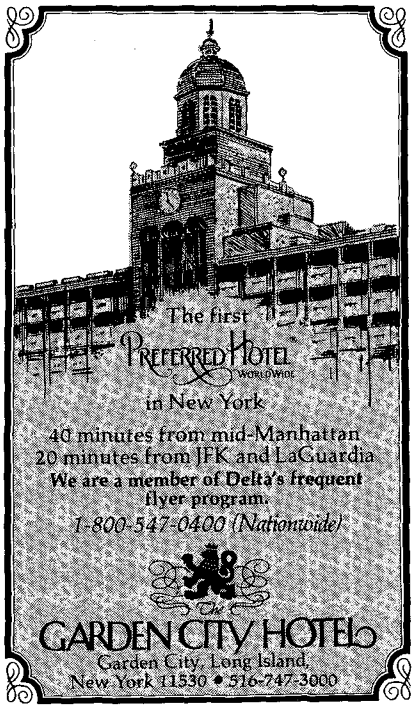

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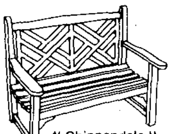

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well written, among them "Uncommon Prints (Including Seven Stranded Whales and a Walrus)" and "Albrecht Dürer—25 Years of His Art: The Engravings of the Madonna and Child, 1495-1520." These two are $5 each.

Inspired by the possibilities inherent in the season, we rode the elevator down, wedged ourself into first an eastbound and then a southbound bus, and disembarked downtown. After sustaining ourself with a spumento from Veniero's Pasticceria, at 342 East 11th Street—chocolate with toasted hazelnut is especially nice, and the tariff is $5.95 a pound—we stepped around the corner to New York Central Art Supply, at 62 Third Avenue (11th). Here an aluminum easel that can hold a canvas or paper up to twenty-eight and a half inches wide costs $54, and an eighteen-by-twenty-four-inch D'Arches watercolor block of twenty-five sheets of rough-surface or cold-pressed hundred-and-forty-pound paper is $43.85. Sennelier extra-soft handmade pastels come in a selection of five hundred and twenty-five colors, including brown-lake violet, Saturn brown, Egyptian brown, carmine brown, and brownish-gray (a set of twenty-five colors costs $43.65), and for those whose brown studies tend to find their expression in words on the page (though we ourself were lately struck by a rapier phrase from Ivy Compton-Burnett: "Thank you very much for your letter. It has broken my heart, but that is the natural result of the use of words") Sennelier sketchbooks, bound with red, black, or natural linen, which might do service as attractive notebooks, cost from $7.90 to $22.70, depending on their size. New York Central also sells Eberhard Faber Blackwing pencils, at $64 per gross. (A lone pencil costs sixty cents, and a dozen are $6.) A Boston Champion crank-handle pencil sharpener is $17.50, Pink Pearl or Ruby rubber erasers are sixty cents each (there is also a remarkable device called the Apollo automatic electric eraser, which rotates automatically when it's held with the eraser pointed down, shuts off when laid on its back, and costs $28), and Gaebel-brand rulers that on one side measure inches and pica and élite type and, on the other, eight- and ten-point and agate type, and also give typewriter-character count, are $8.65 each.

After sharpening our now stubby pencil one last time, we sit down to report that a Renaissance man of the Yankee variety who finds himself, on long winter nights, back at the drawing board (whether designing microchips or newfangled gizmos for streamlining folding ironing boards) might like to discover under this year's tree a book published by the Smithsonian Institution called "American Enterprise: Nineteenth Century Patent Models." It is on sale for $19.95 at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, and features among its contents Patent No. 106,790 (August 30, 1870), the musical rocking chair, and, for compactly lighting a man's way home, No. 245,402 (June 24, 1881), the combined lantern and dinner pail. And here, too, tucked away on a bottom shelf, is a facsimile edition of a book written and illustrated by Rockwell Kent which was first published by the American Artists Group, in 1941. Called "A Northern Christmas: Being the Story of a Peaceful Christmas in the Remote and Peaceful Wilderness of an Alaskan Island," the book is an excerpt from a journal the artist kept during a winter he spent—with his eight-year-old son for company—living in a converted goat shelter on Fox Island, near the Arctic Circle. On almost every page, the simple text is dominated by one of Kent's stern and beautiful drawings—icicles as thick as birch branches hanging outside a casement window, pines furred with snow, a man taking long strides with a small boy trotting beside him. On Christmas Eve, he writes "What a strange thing! Nothing is coming to us, no change in any respect in the routine of our lives but what we make ourselves,—and yet the day looms so large and magnificent before us! I suppose the greatest festivals of our lives are those at which we dance ourselves." The menu for Christmas dinner features "Beans à la Resurrection Bay," and "Sauce à la Alaska Rum." The book has been reissued by Random House, for $14.95; the dedication is "To Everybody, A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year;" and that page is graced by a woodcut of a glowering, imperious archangel.

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WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE DEPT.

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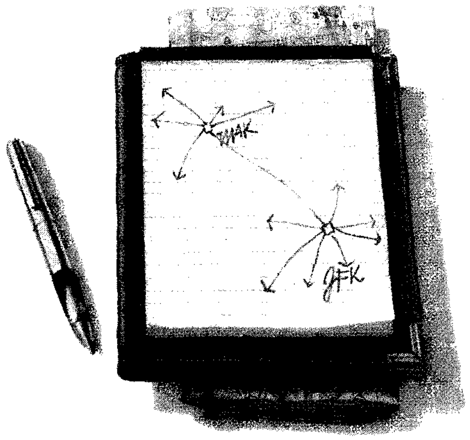

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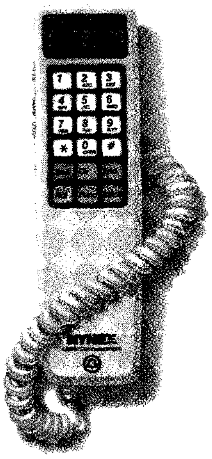

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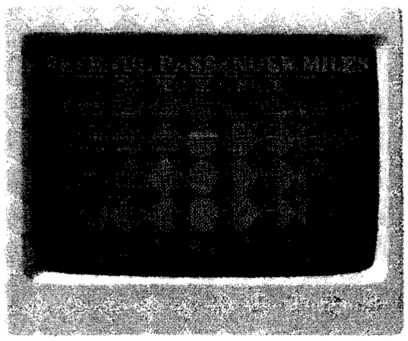

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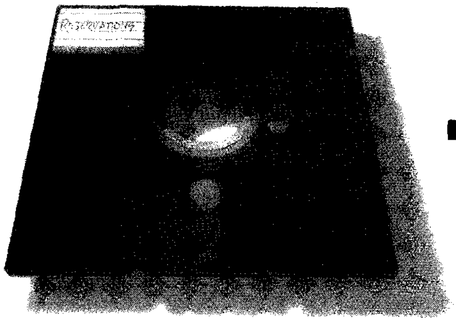

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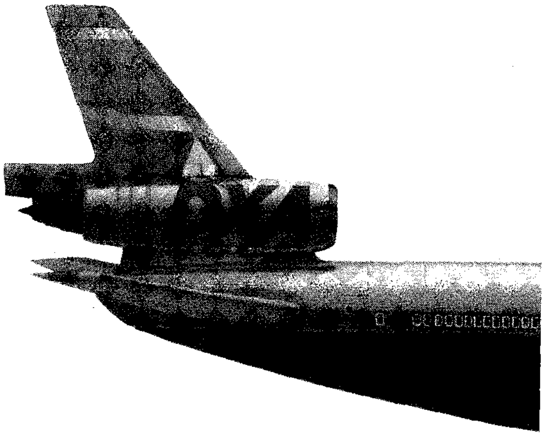

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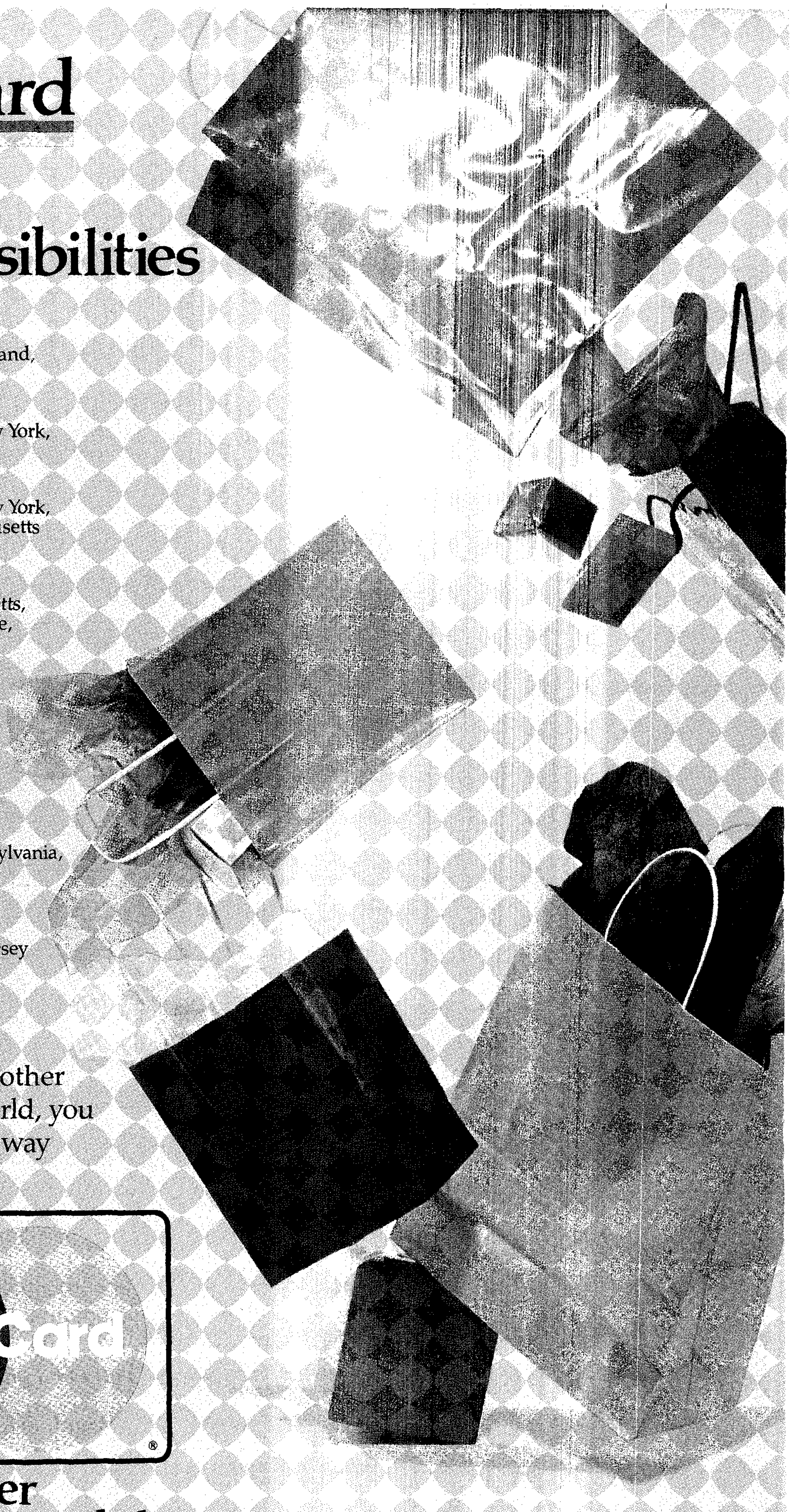

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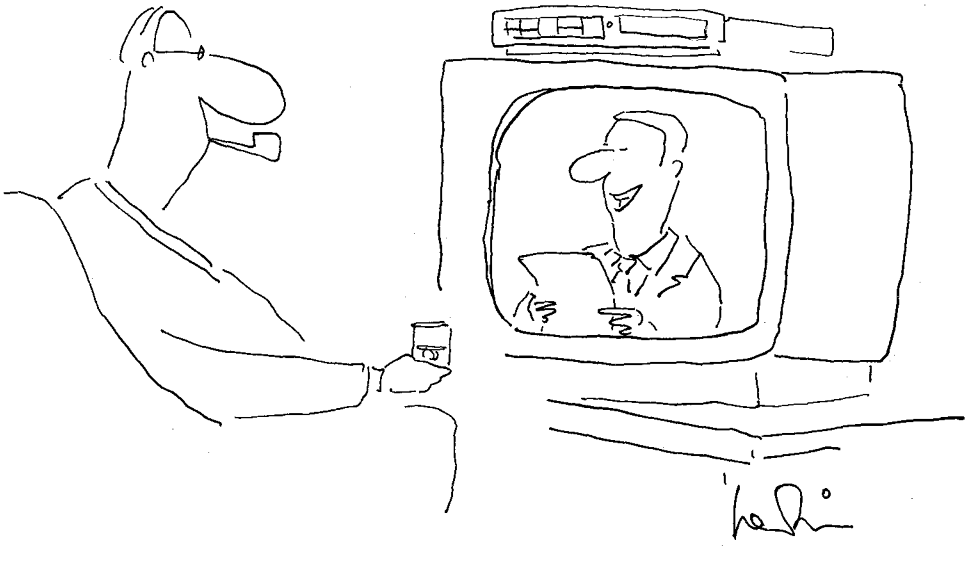
THE ART WORLD

Prodigies

THE dinosaur is making a grand comeback. Lifelike inflatable stegosauruses gaze unreproachfully at us from the windows of toy stores all over town, and the new F. A. O. Schwarz has a whole department (called Toys of Extinction) devoted to their resurgent ilk. The *Times* reports frequently on new paleontological findings that depict the lately unlamented creatures in a more flattering and lovable light. Undoubtedly, some nostalgia is at work here, as it is in most late-twentieth-century social developments, but I have been wondering whether there may not also be increased sympathy among us for things that are ungainly and huge. This would help to explain the ever-expanding production of art books, the dinosaurs of the publishing world. Each year, it seems to me, illustrated art books get larger, heavier, more unwieldy, and less well adapted to their environment. They also become more and more alike. There is now a sort of Standard Illustrated Art Giant, which measures approximately ten by thirteen inches and weighs close to eight pounds. It is printed on heavyweight stock (dead-white, usually glossy), with a great many illustrations in "full color" (as opposed to part color?) and a lengthy text in extra-bold type. Often the text is written by a recognized authority in the field and could be read for intellectual profit, if not exactly for enjoyment, but who on earth reads these texts? Such books are designed not for reading but, rather, for leafing through while you wait for your weekend hostess to finish discussing matters with her arborist. The amount of energy, effort, scholarship, and research that these behemoths require is clearly prodigious, and it must pay off somehow, because the species continues to proliferate. The Standard Illustrateds are not only bigger but a great deal better than the coffee-table art books of yesteryear—more professional in every way. I admire them, but I must confess that I do not love them, and, accordingly, as a matter of sheer personal prejudice, I am including none in this brief survey of the notable art books of 1986.

THERE is no uncertainty about the star attraction this time around. It is "Je Suis le Cahier" (Atlantic Monthly; $65), a one-volume selection of images from the private sketchbooks of Pablo Picasso. Picasso filled a hundred and seventy-five sketchbooks during his long life—the earliest of them is dated 1894, when he was thirteen—and the amazing thing is that almost every page turns out to be as fascinating to the layman as to the scholar. Nearly all the stylistic and conceptual devices that Picasso used in his work were tried out in these pages. We see him oscillating, for example, between the extremes of classical modelling and Cubist abstraction, sometimes on the same page. Viewing these intimate records of genius at first hand, when they were exhibited at the Pace Gallery last spring, was like spying on the evolution of a visual language that helped shape the twentieth century, and the excitement of continual discovery is what we get from the published book as well. Essays by six art historians accompany the six complete sketchbooks reproduced here, and each of the scholars seems to have risen to the occasion by writing with some of the "fierce clarity" that Theodore Reff cites as the essential characteristic of Sketchbook No. 59, dated 1916. (The other essayists are E. A. Carmean, Jr., Robert Rosenblum, Rosalind E. Krauss, Sam Hunter, and Gert Schiff.) The second part of the book is a selection of images from thirty-six other sketchbooks, and there is also a catalogue raisonné describing the hundred and seventy-five, with examples from all but five of them. As Robert Rosenblum writes in his essay, the Master "still seems to be making art posthumously."

YOU might think that Matisse had received his due for the time being in Pierre Schneider's monumental study, called simply "Matisse" (Rizzoli), which came out in 1984. There is always more to be said about great artists, however, and the American art historian Jack Flam, in "Matisse: The Man and His Art, 1869-1918" (Cornell; $75), has come up with another indispensable addition to the Matisse literature. More conventionally organized than Schneider's idiosyncratic work, the Flam book "reconsiders and reëvaluates the art and career of Henri Matisse during the years when he produced his greatest and historically most important works." Although the Matisse exhibition now at the National Gallery in Washington makes a strong case for the importance of the artist's later work, it can hardly be denied that the impact of his early career (up until 1918) equalled, or perhaps even exceeded, that of his rival and colleague Picasso, and that we are still dealing with its effects. Mr. Flam casts light on many aspects of Matisse's work and thought, and corrects a number of misinterpretations. He is particularly effective in pointing out the contradictions and paradoxes inherent in the art of a man so often depicted as a serene, untroubled bourgeois: "The polarities of his personal anxiety determined the polarities of his artistic temperament: respect for authority and the need to rebel; powerful sensuality and severe restraint; intense feeling and spartan self-control. In his work this duality was expressed over and over in the



"Losers outnumbered gainers today. Still, they all played the game."

constant struggle between the physical and the spiritual, between the instinctual and the intellectual, between the formal polarities of color and drawing, surface and depth."

ONE of the most engrossing books on a supreme genius that I have ever read is Jonathan Brown's "Velázquez: Painter and Courtier" (Yale; $45). It is a remarkable accomplishment, for, as Mr. Brown states in his preface, there is virtually no firsthand information on record about Velázquez "as a person or as a thinker on art." Putting together what little is known, setting it against a detailed background of historical information about life at the seventeenth-century Spanish court of Philip IV, and, within this context, subjecting every picture Velázquez painted to a clear, concise, and penetrating analysis, the author has managed to illuminate the man, the period, and our understanding of how great art is made. Velázquez's unending struggle to succeed as a courtier is treated sympathetically; it may have cut into his productiveness as an artist, but it was probably the best course he could have taken, and there is no evidence that worldly ambition diminished the quality of his work. In fact, although during the last eight years of his life Velázquez painted fewer than twenty pictures (most of them royal portraits) every one was a masterpiece. Once he had fully assimilated the lessons of Titian and the Venetians, Velázquez went on to develop a technical mastery of the art of painting which has never been surpassed. Luckily, one of his most miraculous canvases is at the Metropolitan Museum—his "Portrait of Juan de Pareja." Professor Brown's discussion of this wonderfully preserved picture comes close to justifying the famous passage in the earliest biography of the artist, by Antonio Palomino, in which it is said that when the painting was first exhibited in Rome it "gained such universal applause that in the opinion of all the painters of the different nations everything else seemed like painting but this alone like truth."

REALLY good writing about the visual arts is so rare that an entire career spent doing it seems somewhat miraculous in itself. John Rewald, the German-born art historian, offers the most conspicuous living example of such a career, and full recognition has come to him at last. His "Cézanne," an expanded and revised edition of the graduate thesis that he originally published just fifty years ago, has now been brought out in a large and beautifully illustrated format (Abrams; $75). It won the Mitchell Prize for the outstanding art-historical volume of 1986, and it remains the definitive book on Cézanne. Earlier in the year, Abrams brought together a harvest of uncollected Rewald essays in two handsome volumes, called "Studies in Impressionism" and "Studies in Post-Impressionism" (each $37.50), which make glittering pendants to the standard "History of Impressionism" and "Post-Impressionism—From Van Gogh to Gauguin" for which he is best known. I use "standard" here in the sense of the books' having set a standard that no one has come close to matching. Rewald's sentences are alive and supple, his meaning is never in doubt, and his reliance on eyewitness accounts, personal letters, and other firsthand sources brings the reader, as he puts it, "into direct contact with the historic evidence." Unlike some world-renowned scholars, he is a man of strong opinions, succinctly expressed. Consider the opening sentence of his review of Charles Merrill Mount's 1966 biography of Monet, originally published in *ARTnews* and reprinted in "Studies in Impressionism": "This book is biased, Philistine, repetitious, inept, and smug." He was dead right, as usual, and he proceeded to prove it.

ANOTHER kind of writing about the visual arts is provided occasionally by visual artists. Many artists mistrust the written word. Others write with the toilsome opacity of full-color academics. Now and then, however, an artist comes along who attempts to write about his own profession from within, and the results can be jarringly unfamiliar. Two years ago, Frank Stella was invited to give the Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard. He took the assignment very seriously indeed, and his six lectures, which were enthusiastically attended, have now been published by Harvard, under the title "Working Space" ($30). It is an amazing book: brilliant, polemical, full of unexpected insights, occasionally unreadable, sometimes repetitious but never smug, and nothing like conventional art history. Stella's central thesis is that abstract art, the only valid art of our time, has gone dead, because of its failure to achieve the kind of pictorial drama that representation of the human figure once allowed; the solution, he argues—in a wide-ranging discussion that focusses on Caravaggio, Rubens, Manet, Picasso, Kandinsky, and other heroes of pictorial drama—must involve the creation of a new kind of plastic space, which is both illusory and real. Whether or not you follow every step of the argument, the book becomes a stimulating portrait of a major artist engaged in what sounds very much like mortal combat.

"LIVES OF THE GREAT TWENTIETH CENTURY ARTISTS," by Edward Lucie-Smith (Rizzoli; $45), does not have an entry on Stella. This is odd, for the book is well informed, well intentioned, and unbiased. Modelled "perhaps rather impertinently," as the author notes, on Giorgio Vasari's "Lives" of the Renaissance masters, it offers brief but not too brief biographies (approximately fifteen hundred words apiece) of a hundred and one modern painters and sculptors, starting with Edvard Munch and ending with Joseph Beuys. The prose is lively, the information is nicely organized, and the intention is to "help to restore the artist himself to the very center of our thinking about art." Some entries, unavoidably, are already out of date (we are told that Jasper Johns, who is in fact preparing to move into a Manhattan town house, "has now abandoned New York for a secluded house in upper New York State"), and the color reproductions of works of art are in some cases unbelievably inaccurate, but, generally speaking, the book's virtues outweigh its defects.

TWO new books present two masterly graphic series in faithful facsimile, and also comment interestingly, if inadvertently, upon East and West. They are "Domenico Tiepolo: The Punchinello Drawings" (Braziller; $80) and "Hiroshige: One Hundred Famous Views of Edo" (Braziller/Brooklyn Museum; $75). Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (1727-1804), the son of the more famous

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, produced toward the end of his career a series of a hundred and four drawings (pen-and-ink, wash, and chalk) depicting the childhood, youth, courtship, marriage, family, friends, adventures, death, and resurrection of the commedia-dell'arte figure Punchinello (Punch). The grotesque side of the Italian imagination has rarely been better served; the tribe of Punchinellos, all with cone-shaped white hats and chicken beaks, are so fervently dedicated to the expression of human folly that the cumulative effect is more than a little unsettling. The series was broken up in 1921, after a Paris exhibition, and the drawings have not been shown together since. The present volume reproduces seventy-seven of them in color, very beautifully, and the rest in black and white.

The Hiroshige series also marked the culmination of an artist's career. Hiroshige was sixty when he began his "grand farewell performance," a set of a hundred "views" (woodblock prints) of life in Japan's capital city. He completed a hundred and fifteen before his death, two years later, in 1858. The series proved so popular at the time that it went through a great many inexpensive and inferior printings, which, until quite recently, obscured the work's aesthetic brilliance. Bridges, shops, processions, markets, street venders, religious shrines, watercourses, mansions, temple gardens, teahouses, kites flying—all the characteristic scenes of urban life in the period immediately preceding the breakup of the old Japan (Commodore Perry's ships had entered Edo Bay in 1854) are fixed in these indelible images, with their strong, bright colors and vigorous concentration of detail. A visitor from Mars seeing the Tiepolo and the Hiroshige series together would conclude that Western civilization didn't stand a chance.

"Christo: Surrounded Islands" (Abrams; $65) is the season's leviathan—at least twice as big as a Standard Illustrated, and ten times as appealing. Like the 1978 "Christo: Running Fence," it is the *complete* record of a Christo superspectacle; in this case, the installation of floating pink fabric "skirts" around the peripheries of eleven islands in Miami's Biscayne Bay for two weeks in the spring of 1983. Every step in the process is represented, from the first drawing, in 1980, to the gorgeous conclusion. Correspondence with all manner of authorities, minutes of meetings and public hearings, engineers' reports, memos, estimates, bills of sale and lading, aerial surveys, legal-permit applications, environmental-impact reports, press conferences, a sample of pink woven polypropylene (six and a half million square feet of it was eventually deployed), restraining orders, and much more are set forth in detail, with photographs of the installation process, but that takes up only about half the book's six hundred and ninety-six pages. The rest are given over to dazzling color shots (by Wolfgang Volz) of the final result, which, to this awed viewer, was a beautiful, moving, and improbably irresistible event.

"The Last Flowers of Manet," by Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge (Abrams; $19.95), is the season's gem. Only forty-eight pages long, it makes us a gift of the sixteen still-lifes of flowers that Manet painted during the last months of his life, when he was too ill to work on a larger scale. Each picture is a small marvel, showing not a trace of declining powers. "The moves of his brush bring each flower spontaneously into the world: paint becomes flower," the authors observe. "There is something debonair about them, a hint of the corsage, the boutonniere, an evening out." No one else had ever painted flowers this way, with such astringent freshness and such an intricate interplay of light reflected, refracted, and absorbed. The authors' brisk summary of the artist's career as a revolutionary in spite of himself is just what we need, and no more. Reminiscences and observations by Manet's contemporaries accompany the superb color plates. "Always move in the direction of concision," Manet told a visitor to his studio in 1882, a year or so before his death. "And then, cultivate your memories; nature will never give you anything but hints—it's like a railing that keeps you from falling into banality. You must constantly remain the master and do as you please. No tasks! No, no tasks!" —Calvin Tomkins

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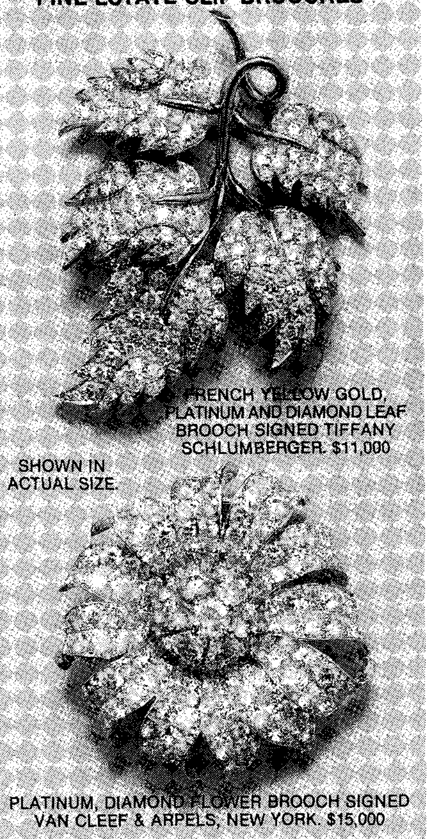

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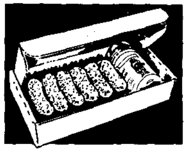

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MUSICAL EVENTS

Anniversaries

VIRGIL THOMSON was ninety on November 25th. WNYC celebrated the day by broadcasting his three operas ("Four Saints in Three Acts," "The Mother of Us All," and "Lord Byron"), three of his film scores ("The River," "Louisiana Story," and "The Plow That Broke the Plains"), the Cello Concerto, chamber compositions, piano sonatas, many of the "Portraits for Piano," and interviews with and readings by the composer, in his inimitably sharp, sassy manner. (The "Portraits"—there are now a hundred and forty or more of them—have been carefully catalogued, with incipits, visual likenesses of the subjects, biographical and publication details, by Anthony Tommasini, in "Virgil Thomson's Musical Portraits," an attractive Pendragon volume.) Thomson's most important pieces are his operas. It is surprising that not one of them is in the national repertory. The Met ignores them (the short-lived Piccolo Met did do "Four Saints" in 1973), but then since Gatti-Casazza's day it has pretty well ignored all American—and, for that matter, most contemporary—operas. The New York City Opera, where "The Mother of Us All" and "Four Saints" should play often and "Lord Byron" occasionally, has left them untouched while bringing forward many native works of lesser merit. Since I came to this country, fourteen years ago, I have encountered three good productions of "The Mother of Us All" (two of them, on a chamber scale, in New York; the third in Chicago, but not at the Lyric), two stagings and one concert performance of "Four Saints," none of them worthy, and a semistaged "Lord Byron" that missed the point of the piece by a still wider margin than the 1972 Juilliard première did.

"About a year ago, we stopped heating with wood. I think that's when we began to realize we didn't really have much in common."

A good birthday present for Thomson would have been an RCA reissue of "Four Saints" in the 1947 recording that he conducted—an abridged version, to be sure, but one that has the charm, the naturalness, and the instinctively right delivery of Gertrude Stein's poetry and Thomson's tunes which have been missing from later performances. (It included six principals of the original, 1934 cast.) And perhaps a public issue of the 1947, première performance of "Mother"—Dorothy Dow the Susan B. Anthony, Otto Luening the conductor—which was broadcast and has been preserved in reasonable sound. (I treasure my tape of it; it's a beautifully voiced, beautifully paced performance.) WNYC didn't choose the right performances to broadcast: they would have been that 1947 "Four Saints," that 1947 "Mother," and the 1972 "Lord Byron," which is the full version of Thomson's opera, before he cruelly abridged it.

Thomson's eightieth birthday was marked by a Santa Fe production of "Mother," his eighty-fifth by a Carnegie concert presentation of "Four Saints." His ninetieth brought—among many other celebrations—a New York staging of "Four Saints," put on by the Opera Ensemble of New York for nine performances in the Lillie Blake School Theatre, on East Eighty-first Street. It wasn't good enough. The trimmings—Rouben Ter-Arutunian's "amusing" décor, built from supermarket-shelf cans and cartons, and his costumes, designed in a Baskin-Robbins palette (pale peach, apricot, pistachio, lime; bright raspberry and blueberry; basic vanilla); a handsome program book that puts Lincoln Center's flimsy pamphlets to shame—were fine. The opera itself somehow disappeared. The cast, directed by John Sheehan, conducted by Paul Dunkel, seemed to have no idea what Stein and Thomson were about. Simplicity, directness, candor, seriousness of utterance were missing. The commère, Joy Blackett, distanced herself from the text with a non-stop grin. The audience sniggered at

Stein's incantatory poetry, even during St. Ignatius' vision of the Holy Ghost descending. It was invited to enjoy a quaint, campy all-black period entertainment when it should have been rapt in a wonderful vision of holiness, rendered—not without jokes, not without wit—in transfigured American speech and transfigured American song. From the general stricture a few performers can be exempted. Lila Ammons' St. Teresa II was sweetly pleasing. Eugene Perry's St. Ignatius had some fervor and intensity. Daryl Davis's St. Plan was fresh and straight. Too many of the others seemed to have come from the studios of singing teachers who had taught them to make noises rather than bring a composer's score to life. Mr. Sheehan and Mr. Dunkel had not turned them into communicators.

"The Mother of Us All" is one of the great American operas—along with Stravinsky's "The Rake's Progress," Roger Sessions' "Montezuma," and Kurt Weill's "Street Scene." Those four works (Bernstein's "Candide" could be added if it were decommercialized, restored to the bright integrity in which it was first conceived) lay a broad foundation for a living national repertory at once distinctive and varied, covering the aspects of life and art, of time past in time present, that opera exists to illumine. And once "The Mother of Us All" has become a repertory opera—as Britten's "Peter Grimes" and Tippett's "The Midsummer Marriage" have become in Britain—"Four Saints in Three Acts" should follow. If "Mother" is Thomson's "Figaro"—a critical drama of sharply limned individuals striving some to overthrow, some to sustain an oppressive social pattern—"Four Saints," with its mixture of simple, popular tunes and radiant sublimity, is his "Magic Flute."

RECENT visits to the Met have revealed entertainments that had little to do with opera as a serious art form. There was this five-act play in which an old gentleman with a little ginger mustache—old but still spry—picked up a pretty young girl at a dance; and later we saw them tumbling about in bed together. The Juliet—the piece was billed as Gounod's "Roméo et Juliette"—was Cecilia Gasdia, making her Met début. She was efficient but rather charmless. Her voice seemed small and monochrome; it was admirably focussed and steady, and so always audible, but there was

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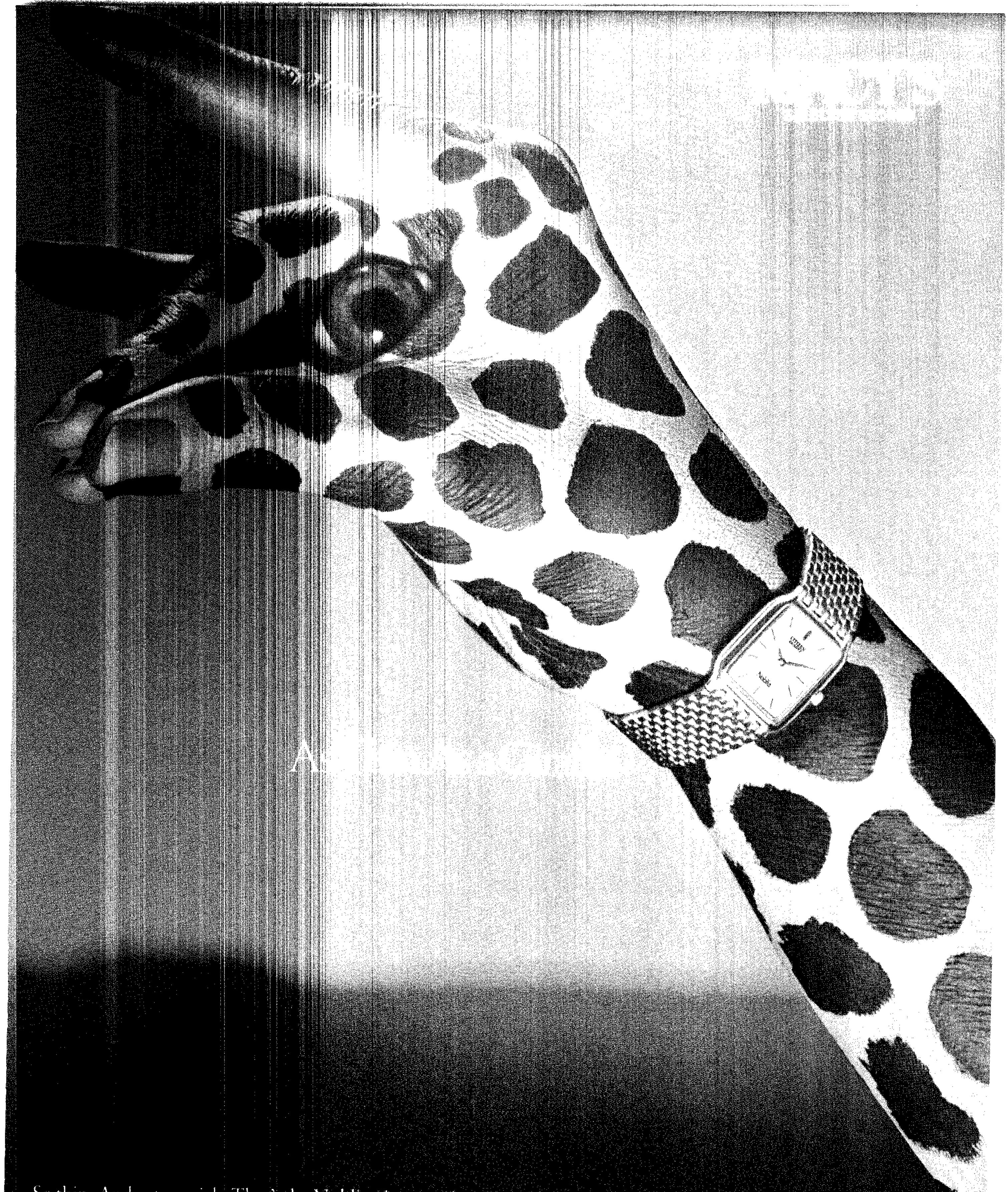
no sparkle in the sound. She essayed no trills and therefore was not yet technically equipped for Gounod's music, in which trills are important. In appearance, Miss Gasdia resembles Adelina Patti—clear brow, strong profile, wide-set eyes, firm chin, lustrous hair—but she lacks the vivacity of countenance that shines in every Patti portrait, and lacks, too, the vivacity of phrasing heard in every Patti record; her rhythmic sense was weak. Her repertory laps Patti's with Gilda, Violetta, Juliet, Bellini's Amina. Patti also sang Aida, Leonora in "Il Trovatore," Valentine in "Les Huguenots." It is difficult to imagine Miss Gasdia filling those roles. But she is young: twenty-six. Her voice may well gain body and brightness. There's good material there. The elderly Romeo was Alfredo Kraus. On the opera stage, voice and art can often conspire to deceive the eye, transforming a drab, bulky soprano into a youthful goddess and a staid, portly tenor into an ardent lover. Mr. Kraus's voice is well preserved, but its timbre was often thin and bleaty. He knows how to phrase, and so people acclaim him as an artist. A real artist engages with the performers around him, while Mr. Kraus seemed to be giving his polished performance in a vacuum. One couldn't altogether blame him, since Romeo's chums and adversaries—Mercutio and Benvolio, Tybalt and Paris—were a clumsy gang, blunt in their manners and blunt in their pronunciation of French. (The stage direction was credited to Fabrizio Melano, but there was no evidence that he or anyone else had given thought to the characters and the drama. Paris's reaction to his bride's apparent death—face blank, eyes fixed on the conductor to be cued for his line "Juste Dieu!"—was like something in a grand-opera skit.) Mr. Kraus understandably dissociated himself from them. Less pardonably, he showed no signs of being in love with Miss Gasdia. In the pit, another tenor, Placido Domingo, was conducting. He was attentive to his colleagues, but his reading had none of the grace and energy that, last season, Sylvain Cambreling brought to Gounod's score.

Then, there was the evening when the soprano sailed in from the wings and began to sing but nothing could be heard, because the house had exploded into ecstatic applause. She stood there awhile, then gave a smile and went back into the wings, to make a second entrance. Dame Joan Sutherland was celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of her Met début. For nearly thirty-five years—she made her Covent Garden début in 1952 (and her Australian début five years before that)—I have admired her. The dramatic promise of her first, 1959 Lucia, directed by Franco Zeffirelli and conducted by Tullio Serafin (who had also been Rosa Ponselle's and Maria Callas's mentor), was never quite fulfilled, but she has sung Donizetti, Bellini, Rossini, Handel, Mozart, Meyerbeer, Verdi with wonderful power, ease, and brilliance. Her voice no longer rings quite so brightly, but at the age of sixty she still has plenty of power and plenty of agility. It wasn't much of an evening, however, for anyone who cared about Bellini's opera "I Puritani." Only three sopranos have sung Elvira at the Met: Marcella Sembrich, in 1883; Maria Barrientos, in 1918; and Dame Joan, first in 1976. The current production, in washy décor by Ming Cho Lee, was an unworthy thing even when new. At the time, its director, Sandro Sequi, said to an interviewer, "Let's face it, the plot of 'Puritani' is one of the weakest of all operas; it's a *terrible* opera." The plot is certainly ramshackle, but the score, when properly paced and purposefully staged—not just with people wandering about—can create a drama both affecting and beautiful. There was a pleasing tenor débutant, Salvatore Fisichella, a Sicilian. He reached barely to Dame Joan's shoulder, and his acting was wooden, but he sang the music cleanly, gracefully, and strongly. The baritone, Sherrill Milnes, was in poor voice, but his presence was compelling. The bass, Samuel Ramey, was in good voice but in boring form; he hardly held one's attention even on the narrative of "Cinta di fiori." Richard Bonynge's conducting was sometimes slack, sometimes jaunty, and seldom satisfactory. The tickets for this celebration were priced at three hundred and fifty dollars.

d. ehrenberg

Elisabeth Söderström made her Met début not twenty-five but twenty-seven years ago, as Mozart's Susanna. Marguerite, Sophie, Adina, and Rosalinde were other Met roles. Then, while the rest of the world acclaimed her as a peerless Richard Strauss and Janáček heroine, in Monteverdi, and in modern operas, the Met largely ignored her. But she returned this season, as Mozart's Countess. She and the conductor, James Levine, adopted a perilously slow tempo for the first aria. The "Larghetto" found in the autograph is not in Mozart's hand, but it is a contemporary indication and makes better sense than "Adagio" or "Largo." After this uneasy start, all went well. Miss Söderström brings to each turn of phrase, whether in recitative, aria, or ensemble, a physical presence intrinsic to the character she portrays. She is one of the most accomplished artists we have. If the great cadence on "Almeno io per loro perdono otterò" made less than its wonted effect, the fault lay with the conductor, for not broadening the tempo, and the director, Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, for leaving the Countess in Susanna's soubrette costume. One further complaint: for the Act II trio Mozart left alternative versions—either Susanna or the Countess takes the top line and runs up to high C's. One or the other must do so if the music is to make sense. In this performance, both the Countess and Susanna (Kathleen Battle) settled for lower options.

This "Figaro," new last season, has a handsome but ill-conceived set (by Mr. Ponnelle): a mid-stage triumphal arch, variously decked, with much of the action set behind it—far, far away, and at times invisible from the sides of the house. This year's singers simply came forward through the arch, toward the footlights. Intimacy was increased, but then they seemed often to be playing in a long strip of no man's land, unrelated to the set—almost as if on a concert platform. The show is still wildly and absurdly overdirected, with non-stop actions, reactions, added entrances and exits, extra characters onstage, but it is efficiently executed. Miss Battle was a shade less enchanting than usual. Frederica von Stade, the Cherubino, was as enchanting as ever, despite the ridiculous Kabuki wig she sports. The new Figaro, José van Dam, was expert—a



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ittle too peasanty, in my view, but that's the way Mr. Ponnelle presents the character. The new Count, Thomas Hampson, making his Met début, sang suavely but was a little too foppish, not dangerous. Loretta di Franco, Ugo Benelli (another débutant), and Paolo Montarsolo—Marcellina, Basilio, and Bartolo—were an accomplished comic trio. As big-house "Figaro"s go, this one wasn't at all disgraceful.

IN a bout of patriotic piety, the Philharmonic last month performed the Second Symphony of John Knowles Paine. Paine (1839-1906), a New Englander, Berlin-trained, was Harvard's first professor of music, an mportant teacher (of John Alden Carpenter, Arthur Foote, Daniel Gregory Mason, and many others), and a force in Boston music. For modern listeners, he became more than a name in history when New World Records, in 1978, brought out his ong, impressive Mass in D. It was his irst big piece; the Berlin Singakademie gave the première, in 1867. His First Symphony appeared in 1876, he Second in 1880. It's a long work: he Philharmonic performance lasted nearly an hour. It has a program: the ubtitle is "Spring," and the four movements are "Departure of Win-er" (adagio sostenuto) leading into "Awakening of Nature" (allegro ma non troppo); "May Night Fantasy" (a cherzo); "A Romance of Springtime" the adagio); and "The Glory of Na-ure" (allegro giojoso). The key is A. The second subject of the first movement and the slow movement are in F. The scherzo is in D minor. The second subject of the finale is in C. Paine eems to have plotted out some third-moves scheme, but the work lacks harmonic energy: the modulations are achieved by academic rote, and then he music plumps down again in each new key. Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms supply the procedures, the motifs, the textures. The Philharmonic program-note writer suggested a parallel with Dvořák, as someone who "emulated he same earlier masters, to similar ends," but honesty made him admit hat "Paine's acceptably sonorous orchestration shows none of Dvořák's coloristic invention and brilliance" and that "Paine is merely a melodist of grace where Dvořák is a melodist of genius."

Of course, one was curious to hear the piece. And it was not at all disagreeable to hear. It was not particularly rewarding, either. The things that sharpened attention—that seemed more than secondary workings of veins mined by pioneers—were rhythmic: Brahmsian cross-accents, syncopations, irregular phrase lengths. The end of the slow movement—the strings close their melody over a pulsing pedal note from the horn—and the tricky scansion of the finale's principal theme revealed an imagination more than commonplace. It may be that the Philharmonic chose the wrong Paine symphony to revive. Kenneth C. Roberts, Jr., in the New Grove essay on Paine detects a decline in the quality of his music after the Mass and the First Symphony—a decline due to Paine's "desire to align himself with musical progress." The First Symphony,

> while not of uniformly superior quality, states its classical case with force and eloquence. A masterly handling of the sonata idea is notable in the opening movement and a lovely, mid-19th-century melodic slow movement, with no unnecessarily cloying chromaticisms present. The second [symphony] attempts to be programmatic, and rambles into mere derivation of more current European models.

The Philharmonic hopes to record both symphonies for New World Records; perhaps it will be playing the First next season. And, of course, one is curious to hear what promises to be an attractive piece. It is easy to make a case for exhuming the national repertory, but discernment, value judgments are needed, too. The Philharmonic has in sixty years played only three of Roger Sessions' nine symphonies: the Second in 1950, the Eighth in 1968, and the Third in 1976. It has never played the Piano Concerto, the Double Concerto, the Divertimento, the Rhapsody, the Concerto for Orchestra, or the Concertino. It has left the Violin Concerto unheard since 1959. John Knowles Paine is an Interesting Historical Figure. Sessions is a great composer with something individual, challenging, and important to offer.

The performance, conducted by Zubin Mehta, was warmly played, with well-balanced sound; in the finale the brass achieved grandeur without stridency. The concert began with Webern's Concerto, Opus 24; the nine instrumentalists gave a cleanly focussed account of it, not always clearly audible above the ordinary ambient sound of a Philharmonic audience. It continued with Mahler's "Kindertotenlieder;" Marilyn Horne sang them carefully, correctly, unemotionally.

—ANDREW PORTER

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THE THEATRE

Making Good

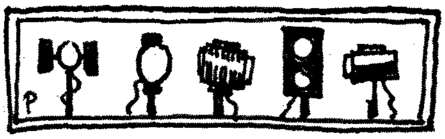
NEIL SIMON'S "Broadway Bound" (at the Broadhurst) is the third of three autobiographical plays from Mr. Simon's hand, the first being "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and the second "Biloxi Blues." According to newspaper reports, the present work completes a cycle, though the playwright has led his hero and stand-in, Eugene Jerome, only into his early twenties. Safe at last from what Yeats calls "the ignominy of boyhood; the distress of boyhood changing into man," Eugene stands on tiptoe at the beginning of his career as a writer, looking north from Brooklyn toward the incomparable bedazzlement of Manhattan.

As Eugene wisely comments in the course of "Broadway Bound," for a writer his life and his work are one; *pace* Joyce, he cannot hope to make himself as absent from his work as God is—or is able to pretend He is—from His. Instead, the writer must learn to steel his heart against the accusation that "all" he has done is ransack family memories—an accusation that is likely to be directed at him first by members of his family. (Over the years, if the work that has embarrassed the family proves successful the accusation will gradually transform itself into a boast, the supposed victims claiming to see a resemblance to themselves greater than literary historians may prove willing to grant.) In the first two plays of his trilogy, Simon evinced a certain skittishness in respect to this age-old problem: whenever he approached his stated autobiographical subject matter, he would tend to fall back upon his skills as a writer of funny lines to get him past the perilous corner of revelation. Frost said, "No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader," and it is good news that in "Broadway Bound" Simon has successfully purged himself of his dread of tears.

In family life, nothing fortunate is probable. It is this dictum that Simon eloquently dramatizes as young Eugene confronts his fate as a member of a disintegrating family and his fate as a writer for whom that disintegration is an indispensable source of material. Eugene senses that there is something shameful in the degree to which, in the arts, compassionate observation becomes a transaction—a bargain in which felt pain is traded for money and glory. He also senses that no practical alternative exists—that were he to become a dentist or a truck driver, on some level of seeking self-fulfillment a transaction would still be taking place, a bargain would still be struck.

We are nearing the end of the twentieth century, and for much of that century we have been making the acquaintance, in plays, novels, verse, and biography, of the working-class Jewish family, whether of the first, second, or third generation, and whether living on the lower East Side or in Brooklyn or the Bronx. We have grown familiar with the characters who fill these works of art and with their houses, their aspirations, their comical or tragical "oi veh"s. And I hope it will not be thought unjust of me to point out that Simon is a diligent reader as well as a diligent writer; in "Broadway Bound" we cannot fail to hear echoes of Odets, Miller, Bellow, Roth, Kazin, and half a dozen other faithful chroniclers of our urban depths. For besides his own family memories the other indispensable source of material for a writer is every other writer's family memories; the past is not only what we spring from but who we are, and if I encounter in "Broadway Bound" a rickety socialist grandfather whose hero is Trotsky I encounter him as an old friend and find him no less welcome on that account.

Simon breaks new ground in his career not by his depiction of the grandfather, or even of young Eugene (*semblable* of Eugene Gant and Stephen Dedalus, among a host of others), but by his unflinching portrait of Eugene's father and mother, two miserable people who (to quote Frost again) have "nothing to look backward to with pride, and nothing to look forward to with hope." The mother, to be sure, nourishes herself—and her son—with a single event that took place in her teens and has assumed for her, as the years and decades passed, the consolatory authority of myth: once, in a place called the Primrose Ballroom, she danced with George Raft. As an event, it is not enough to outweigh the humdrum disappointments of a whole lifetime, and she knows—and her son knows—that it is not enough. And yet she will go on getting up in the morning, morning after morning. The huge whispered "Why?" that hovers above that action is never to be answered.



Linda Lavin gives a brilliant performance as the mother; as the father—a role equally interesting but much less thoroughly worked out, and with an unworthy mumbo-jumbo about sealed letters to bring it to an end offstage—Philip Sterling impressively conveys the feelings of a man who has placed some value on his life and has found that value debased by the inescapable dreariness of his circumstances. Jonathan Silverman plays Eugene, and does so charmingly—like any author, Simon gives his stage self more than a fair share of the best lines. Jason Alexander plays Eugene's older brother with appropriately demonic zest, and John Randolph as the Trotskyite grandfather—sour, arbitrary, gruff, and grumpy—has the role of a lifetime and plays it as such, to our delight. (Why do we all dote on a grandfather in a play whom we would put an axe to in real life?) Phyllis Newman as Eugene's wealthy aunt, long in exile from Brooklyn, has a part too small to make anything memorable of; it appears to have been much reduced while the "Broadway Bound" was still Broadway bound, and could easily have been omitted altogether.

The scenery—a Brighton Beach house that you could move into tomorrow but wouldn't want to—was designed by David Mitchell, who must fear that some of the domestic bric-a-brac he makes use of will follow him to the grave; the costumes are by Joseph G. Aulisi; the lighting is by Tharon Musser; and the almost immaculate direction is by Gene Saks. I say "almost": surely it is not too late to cut the cheap sight gag of the mother holding out her hand at precisely the right height and angle to test Eugene's fevered forehead as he comes down the stairs. I suppose it *is* too late for Saks to persuade Simon to remove one of those purely synthetic Simon gags that I have had reason to deplore in so much of his past work—a gag about the Statue of Liberty, which, I admit, gets the biggest laugh in what is for Simon an unprecedentedly serious comedy, and therefore no doubt strikes him as precious beyond rubies. Oh, well! There are some mighty poor gags in Shakespeare, too, but nobody has invited me to do away with them.

—BRENDAN GILL

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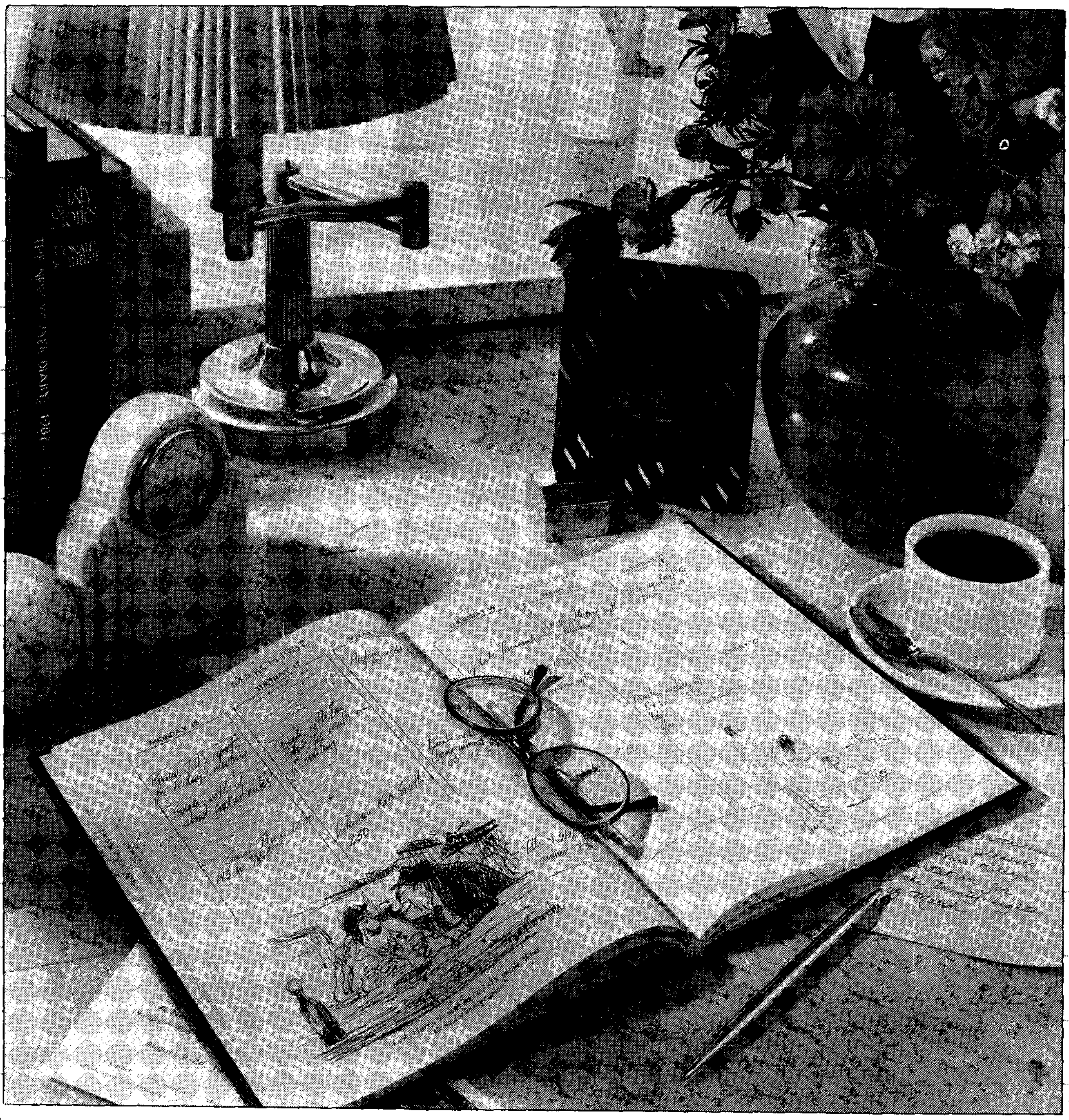

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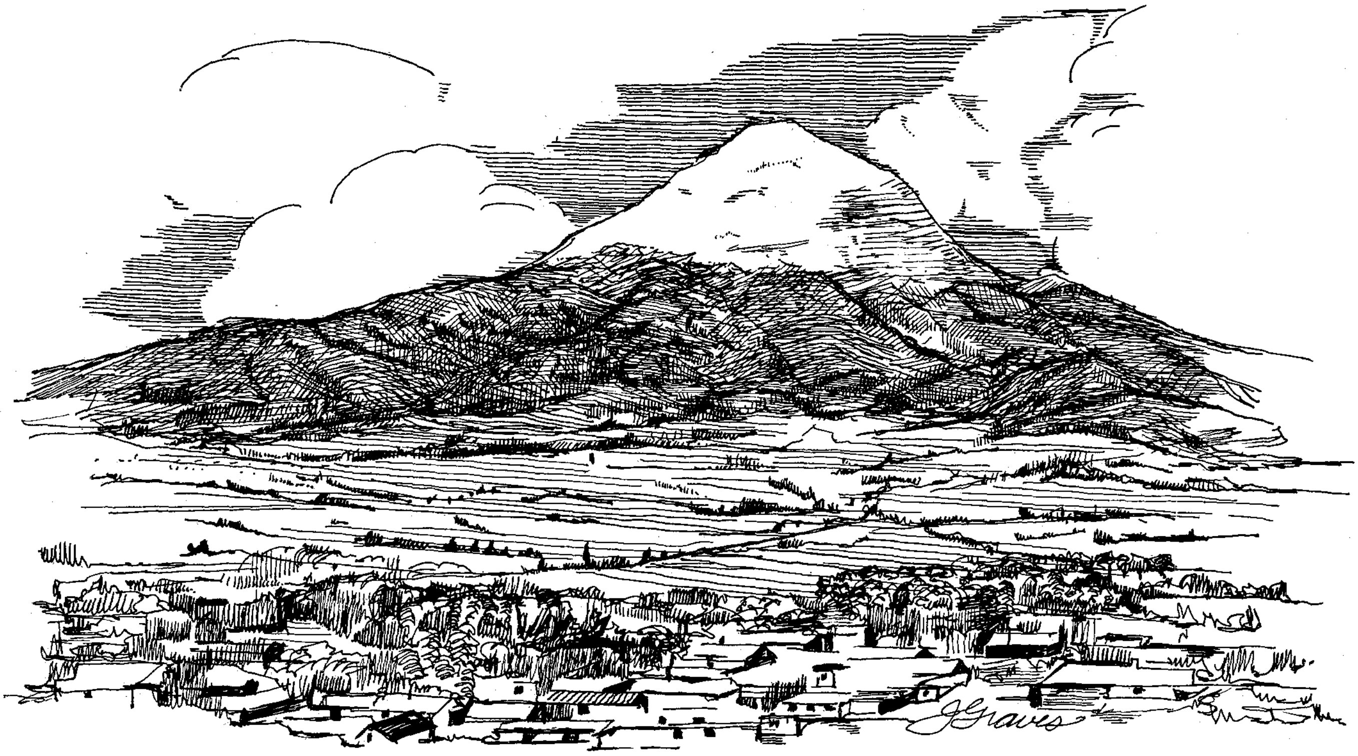
OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

POPOCATÉPETL



MOST travellers to Mexico City—known everywhere in the country simply as "México"—arrive by air. One flies over the crenellated landscape of rugged hills and valleys to the Mexican Plateau, on which, at an altitude of 7,347 feet, the metropolis sprawls. It is difficult to imagine this barren plain as the site of the great Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán—with its lakes and canals, a Latin-American Venice—which fell to Cortés and his band of four hundred soldiers in 1519. Bernal Díaz del Castillo, the most articulate of Cortés' party, wrote of Tenochtitlán, "It was like the enchantments they tell of in the legend of Amadis. . . . Gazing on such wonderful sights, we did not know what to say, or whether what appeared before us was real, for on one side, on the land, there were great cities, and in the lake ever so many more, and the lake itself was crowded with canoes, and in the causeway were many bridges at intervals, and in front of us stood the great City of Mexico." Cortés was made welcome by the last of the Aztec emperors, Montezuma II; within two years the city was his and Montezuma was dead.

It is easy to become sentimental about the conquest of the Aztecs and the destruction of Tenochtitlán but less easy to mourn the loss of Aztec civilization. It was a stern theocracy, and the crowns of its civic architecture, all in gleaming white-faced stone, were the giant sacrificial pyramids. Human beings—mostly men, but sometimes women and children—were marched to the top of these pyramids and held down by priests while their still beating hearts were ripped out of their bodies with stone knives. On one occasion, it is reported, twenty thousand prisoners were sacrificed, to commemorate the completion of a new temple. It is hard to be sentimental about *that*. Much has been made of this pyramid architecture. It has been suggested that early Egyptians crossed the Atlantic on rafts, bringing with them their pyramid technology. Perhaps this is true, but after I had flown over the high Aztec plain several times it occurred to me that the explanation might be simpler. The Mexican Plateau abounds in natural structures more massive than anything that even the Aztecs could hope to build. Most of these appear to be stillborn volcanoes, arrested early in their development, but there are a number of mature ones. To the east and southeast of the city lie three of the most beautiful high mountain volcanoes in the world: about a hundred and twenty miles away is Orizaba—known to the Aztecs as Citlaltépetl, or "mountain of the star"—which, at 18,700 feet, is the third-highest mountain in North America (after McKinley, in Alaska, and Logan, in the Canadian Northwest); and about forty miles away are the twin volcanoes of Popocatépetl (17,887 feet) and Iztaccíhuatl (17,343 feet). "Iztaccíhuatl" (which is pronounced something like "Ishta-sea-wattle") means "sleeping woman," and its shape is indeed suggestive of a sleeping woman. Of the three, Popocatépetl is the only one that shows signs of activity. "Popocatépetl" means "smoking mountain," and it is still smoking. In the Aztec period, Popo—as it is known locally—and Orizaba were both very active. Orizaba has been dormant since 1687. These snow-covered volcanoes, and several others nearby that reach to about fourteen thousand feet, must have played a tremendous role in the artistic and religious consciousness of the Aztecs. To me, at least, it is little wonder that the most sacred buildings in the Aztec cosmos were constructed to resemble volcanoes.

From a climber's point of view, the most accessible of the three big volcanoes is Popocatépetl. The Mexican government has turned the land surrounding Popocatépetl and Iztaccíhuatl into a Parque Nacional, and one can drive—on very good roads—up to the park station of Tlamacas, which, at about thirteen thousand feet, lies at the base of Popo, in the saddle between it and its twin. The two volcanoes are connected by a high pass known as Cortés' Pass. Is is a stiff four-hour walk, I am told, to the first climbing hut on Izta, whereas the climbing hut on Popo can be reached in about two hours. Orizaba is a different proposition altogether; by car, it is well over twice the distance from Mexico City, and the road to the base of the mountain is rudimentary at best.

Of course, one must get to Mexico City in the first place. In my case, it was—in Pasteur's celebrated phrase—a matter of chance favoring the prepared mind. The National Science Foundation has a program of exchange visits for United States and Latin-American scientists, which I joined a while ago, along with a colleague from The Rockefeller University, Professor Mirza Abdul Baqi Bég. Three Mexican physicists from the Centro de Investigación y des Estudios Avanzados del Instituto Politécnico Nacional—a sort of Mexican Institute for Advanced Study in all the sciences, situated on the outskirts of Mexico City—visited Rockefeller and the Stevens Institute of Technology, where I teach physics. In return, I arranged to make a two-week visit to the Centro. Most of my work there was to be done with one of our visitors—Dr. Arnulfo Zepeda Domínguez, who, like so many Mexicans, is of mixed Spanish and Indian descent. Zepeda had taken his Ph.D. training under Bég at Rockefeller, and he is completely bilingual in Spanish and English. While Zepeda was in New York, I asked him about the chances of climbing Popo on one of the weekends the following January, when I would be in Mexico City. He had never climbed it, he told me, but many people from the Centro had, and he would look into it when he returned. He also told me that at least a dozen people a year die on that particular climb—a cheerful thought. In due course, a letter came back from him saying that January was an ideal month in which to make the climb, since the weather then was generally clear and not too hot; that I would need crampons and an ice axe; and that *guías* (guides) could be arranged. As a climb, Popo does not have much of a reputation for difficulty; a few of Cortés' soldiers got most of the way up in 1519, and a couple of years later some others collected sulfur from the crater for use in the manufacture of gunpowder, setting an altitude record that lasted until the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, any high snow-covered mountain on which one needs crampons and an ice axe, and on which several people a year are killed, is, in my view, nothing to take lightly. I wrote Zepeda that I would be glad to go with the *guías*.

A couple of months later, burdened with a heavy mountain pack and a briefcase full of physics books, I was standing in a check-in line for a flight to Mexico City, surrounded by people carrying tennis racquets and golf clubs and heading to Acapulco or Cozumel. Under such circumstances, one always encounters somebody who insists on knowing all about why one is carrying what one is carrying. In this instance, it was a middle-aged American woman, a resident of Mexico City, who seemed to enjoy informing me that the ice cap on Popo was especially low and dangerous that year, and that people had been "dropping like flies" all over the volcano. Shortly before the plane began its descent to Mexico City, the pilot announced that if we looked out the windows on my side we would see all three of the high volcanoes, whose summits were pushing their way up through the low-lying clouds. They looked enormous, and after I had inspected Popocatépetl my principal thought was "My God, how am I going to get up *that*?"

As it turned out, this question was very nearly irrelevant. Mexico City was in the throes of an intense and unaccustomed cold spell. For nearly a week after my arrival, the temperatures bordered on freezing. There was practically no central heating in Mexico City—not even the automobiles were equipped with heaters—so everyone, outside and in, was bundled up and shivering. To add to the general discomfort, the city and its environs were, as usual, all but smothered in smog—made up of industrial pollution, exhaust pouring out of tens of thousands of old and untuned vehicles, and fine dust swept off the ancient lakebed on which the city is built. The combined effect of the smog and the thinness of the air at seven thousand feet was murderous; one's eyes watered from morning to night. It was raining in the valley and snowing heavily in the mountains, and the prospects for climbing Popo or anything else were not very good.

Zepeda and I nevertheless decided to visit the *guías*. If we didn't make contact with them, there would be no hope at all of attempting a climb. Zepeda had learned that many of the local climbing clubs—some of them university clubs and others industrial (industries finance climbing clubs, football clubs, and similar organizations, which, as someone remarked, is cheaper to do than raising salaries)—occupied quarters in a single building on the Avenida San Juan de Letrán, in downtown Mexico City. He had also found out that none of them opened before seven o'clock at night, because all the members worked or went to school during the day. On a Monday night around seven, therefore, we wandered around in a nondescript loft building in a search for climbing clubs and *guías*. The *guías*, we had learned, were all members of the Socorro Alpino de México—a voluntary alpine-rescue service also composed of students and people with full-time jobs—and we eventually found the Socorro's lair, which turned out to be filled with young people wearing assorted items of climbing clothing: boots, down jackets, and the like. When Zepeda explained why we had come, I was examined as a sort of curiosity. While many Americans—or *norteamericanos*, as the Mexicans like to say—have climbed Popocatépetl, it appeared that I was the first to consult the Socorro about possible guides. I was asked what my climbing experience had been—a question that I always find difficult to answer, because it is hard to know exactly what is meant. I did not want to oversell myself as a climber, since I had no idea of how I would perform at such altitudes or of how difficult Popo really was compared with climbs I had previously made. I said, "Some," and let it go at that.

One of the Socorro guides—a short, compact fellow constructed like a Nepalese Sherpa—presently introduced himself as Guillermo Rangel, and said that he would go with me as head guide, along with two others who wanted to make the climb for the fun of it. Mimo, as he was nicknamed, told me that there were three basic routes up Popo, with variants, but that all the routes except the standard one—known as Las Cruces—were currently too risky, because of avalanche danger from the recent snows. Not knowing one route from another, I was perfectly happy to accept Las Cruces. He then asked if I wanted to do the climb in one, two, or three days, which rather stopped me. Considering the altitude, one day seemed out of the question. Three days would extend the weekend into Monday, which also seemed out of the question, so I opted for two—Saturday and Sunday. The only costs involved, Mimo said, would be money for food for the four of us for two days. (Later, I made a few discreet inquiries and learned that a *regalo*, or gift, to the Socorro for equipment would be welcomed, and in the event I contributed about forty dollars toward the cost of replacing some of their ancient mountain gear.) The two-day trip clearly involved spending the night out on the mountain, and Mimo explained that this would be done in an *albergue*, at an altitude of some fourteen thousand seven hundred feet (about the height of the summit of Mt. Rainier). "*Y hace frío*" ("It will be cold"), Mimo added. It seemed that the *albergue* was completely without amenities. There were not even bunks, so I should supply myself with a sleeping bag—*una bolsa de dormir*—or, at least, a very heavy serape. I decided that I had better get a sleeping bag, and Mimo told me about a store in Mexico City that leased alpine equipment. We exchanged names, addresses, and telephone numbers, with the understanding that I would hear from someone during the week.

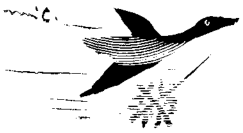
The next day, I went to the shop Mimo had recommended and bought an inexpensive light-blue Mexican sleeping bag (none were for rent) that came with a testimonial stating, in part, that it had been "*probada en las principales alturas de México, bajo las condiciones más adversas*" ("tested in the highest altitudes in Mexico, under the most adverse conditions"), which sounded promising. Now all we needed was a break in the weather—which appeared to be getting worse and worse. On Wednesday night, at about nine o'clock, the phone rang in my hotel room, and the hotel's receptionist announced that the Socorro Alpino was on the line. There then took place a sort of scrambled English-Spanish conversation—my own Spanish, a high-school relic, is useless on the telephone, where explanatory gestures and drawings are not possible—in which, it seemed to me, it had been decided that (a) the weather was about to improve, and (b) the Socorro would come by the hotel the following evening at nine, for the purpose, as far as I could make out, of providing precise details of the food list.

I was therefore somewhat startled when the phone rang the next morning at eight-twenty and the receptionist announced that the Socorro Alpino was downstairs in the lobby. Upon descending, I found Mimo, still dressed in his mountain gear—a red waterproof parka decorated with the Socorro insignia, and climbing boots—and a similarly attired fellow-member, whom I had not previously met, and who, I think, had been chosen for this particular mission because of his English vocabulary, which was the equal of my Spanish. They wanted to draw up a menu, with a price list, for our meals. There would be three official meals, plus a fourth for the *improvisto*—the unexpected. I was not very happy about the concept of the *improvisto*, but in the high mountains it is always good to expect it. Zepeda had agreed to lend us a marvellous portable butane alpine cooker that he had bought in Aspen; if we could get it to function, it would provide us with plenty of cooking and boiling power. Mimo said that our liquids—an absolute essential at high altitudes—would consist mainly of fruit juice and melted snow. I decided to fill my canteen with Tehuacán, a Mexican mineral water that comes in both a flat and a fizzy variety. For a moment, I toyed with the idea of filling the canteen with fizzy water but decided that its effects might be part of the *improvisto*, and provided myself with the flat kind, after carefully testing the leakproofness of my canteen at what I thought were all possible angles. We arranged to meet at ten o'clock Saturday morning at the hotel, in full gear. Zepeda had kindly agreed to drive us up to the station at Tlamacas.

d. ehrenberg

DURING the next two days, the weather got steadily better, and by Saturday the city was basking in sunshine beneath the omnipresent and horrible smog. Promptly at ten, I came down to the hotel lobby, fully attired in alpine gear, to wait for Zepeda and the *guías*. Zepeda appeared at about quarter to eleven, but by eleven-fifteen the *guías* still hadn't shown up. According to Zepeda, there was nothing to worry about. "We Mexicans have a different sense of time from yours," he said. "If they said they would be here, they will be here." About quarter of twelve, Mimo arrived with a young chap named Pedro Junco, who looked to be seventeen or eighteen and was, I gathered, a sort of Socorro *guía*-in-training. Pedro was going to accompany us to the Las Cruces hut, where he would man a radio, which they were carrying up, as part of the Socorro's patrol duties on the mountain. Together we figured out that the Spanish equivalent of my first name—Jeremy—was something like Géronimo, so Géronimo I became. We packed ourselves into Zepeda's car, and there followed a jaunt through what seemed like most of Mexico City while we performed various errands for the Socorro; these included picking up an essential radio antenna and the even more essential fourth member of our party, a tall young man, with a very pleasant sort of clown's face, named Rodolfo Pérez.

Now we were really on our way. The route at first followed the main highway toward Puebla and the Gulf Coast. When we passed a large complex of buildings, Rodolfo remarked that it was the local mental hospital and perhaps contained a few unfortunates who had suffered from anoxia on Popo. Nearby were a few small pyramidal hills, but as yet there was no sign of Popo. After about half an hour, we turned south off the main highway in the direction of Chalco—an ancient town that was once noted for its lakes and canals—and Cuernavaca. The traffic was quite heavy, and Zepeda explained that everyone who can leaves Mexico City on the weekends. On Sunday nights, the normally two-lane, two-way Chalco-Cuernavaca road is converted into something like six "lanes" heading toward Mexico City with cars and buses bumping along in the fields on both sides of the paved road. At two-thirty or so, we stopped for lunch in Amecameca, the last village before the mountains, and visited the large outdoor market. The *guías* were somewhat disappointed when I didn't evince any enthusiasm for what appeared to be millions of fake Aztec bowls, so I bought two small wooden "good luck" pigs and a package of candy, which we ate on the spot.



After Amecameca, the road heads sharply upward, through some lovely pinewoods and into the national park. Now the twin volcanoes gradually came into view. Lord, they were huge! Great snow-covered masses loomed well over a mile vertically above our heads. Soon there were cars parked everywhere along the sides of the road, and finally, about a mile from Tlamacas, we were brought to a complete halt by a jam of automobiles and buses that were trying to get back down. The guides got out and flashed their insignia at someone official-looking, but were told that it was physically impossible to drive any farther, no matter who one was. Resigned, we got out with our climbing packs, said goodbye to Zepeda, and prepared to walk the rest of the way to the station. I had not got very far before a small boy rushed up to me and gave me to understand that something was leaking out of my pack. The canteen had obviously found some angle at which to open, and most of the Tehuacán had disappeared somewhere inside. I was afraid to investigate. I just stoppered up what was left, and off we went, very slowly, under the weight of our packs.

During the previous fall, in anticipation of this enterprise, I had been running, whenever possible, in Central Park. I am now convinced that while this is better than nothing it is not *much* better when you are preparing for a climb at high altitudes. There is simply no substitute for acclimatization to the lack of oxygen. We were now only eleven thousand feet up, and already I was experiencing the characteristic headache and thumping of the heart. I stopped to swallow a couple of aspirin, and trudged on past the endless line of automobiles. By the time we reached the Albergue de Juventud—a huge, modern youth hostel—at Tlamacas, I was very glad to stop. Mimo had called a halt here so that we could sort out and redistribute the gear to be carried up to the Las Cruces hut. For some reason, the hostel's doors were locked, but after some vigorous pounding Mimo succeeded in rousing someone in the interior. When we entered the large, attractive reception room, I could see several families apparently picnicking. Rodolfo fished into his pack and, with a triumphant look, came up with a huge bottle of tequila, most of which he emptied into a plastic canteen and the rest of which he drank. The canteen was put carefully back in his pack. Pedro drew the radio transmitter to carry, and the rest of us divided up the food, the butane stove, and so on. It was now about five-thirty in the afternoon, and the sun was setting. It was getting distinctly chilly, and through the windows of the Albergue I could make out dozens of Mexican families heading down the lower trails that line the foot of Popo and back to their cars. (Some had made snow statuettes, which they mounted on the hoods. Snow is a rarity around Mexico City, and people seem to revel in it when they find it, as if it were a new element.) We left the Albergue and headed up a broad trail, two miles long, that wound around the base of the mountain toward the climbing hut, which was about seventeen hundred feet farther up. The surface of the trail consisted of several inches of fine black volcanic dust, and walking uphill in it was like climbing in soft snow—two steps up and one step back. Across Cortés' Pass, which was just below us, Iztaccíhuatl was in full view. Mimo had brought along a small transistor radio, and now he tuned in a radio station in Mexico City that specializes, night and day, in *la música dulce*—a sort of Muzak punctuated by commercials. That evening, a Burt Bacharach festival seemed to be in progress, so we slogged along accompanied by "Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head" and the rest of the familiar repertoire. The trail became exceedingly steep, and from time to time we would all sink down on rocks beside it to catch our breath. The sun had set, and it was pitch black. We got out our flashlights, but before we could make much use of them the moon rose clear and

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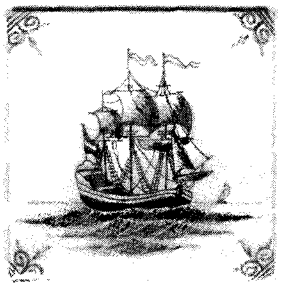

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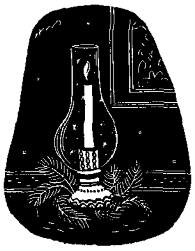
full. In the moonlight, the twin volcanoes were an eerie and lovely sight.

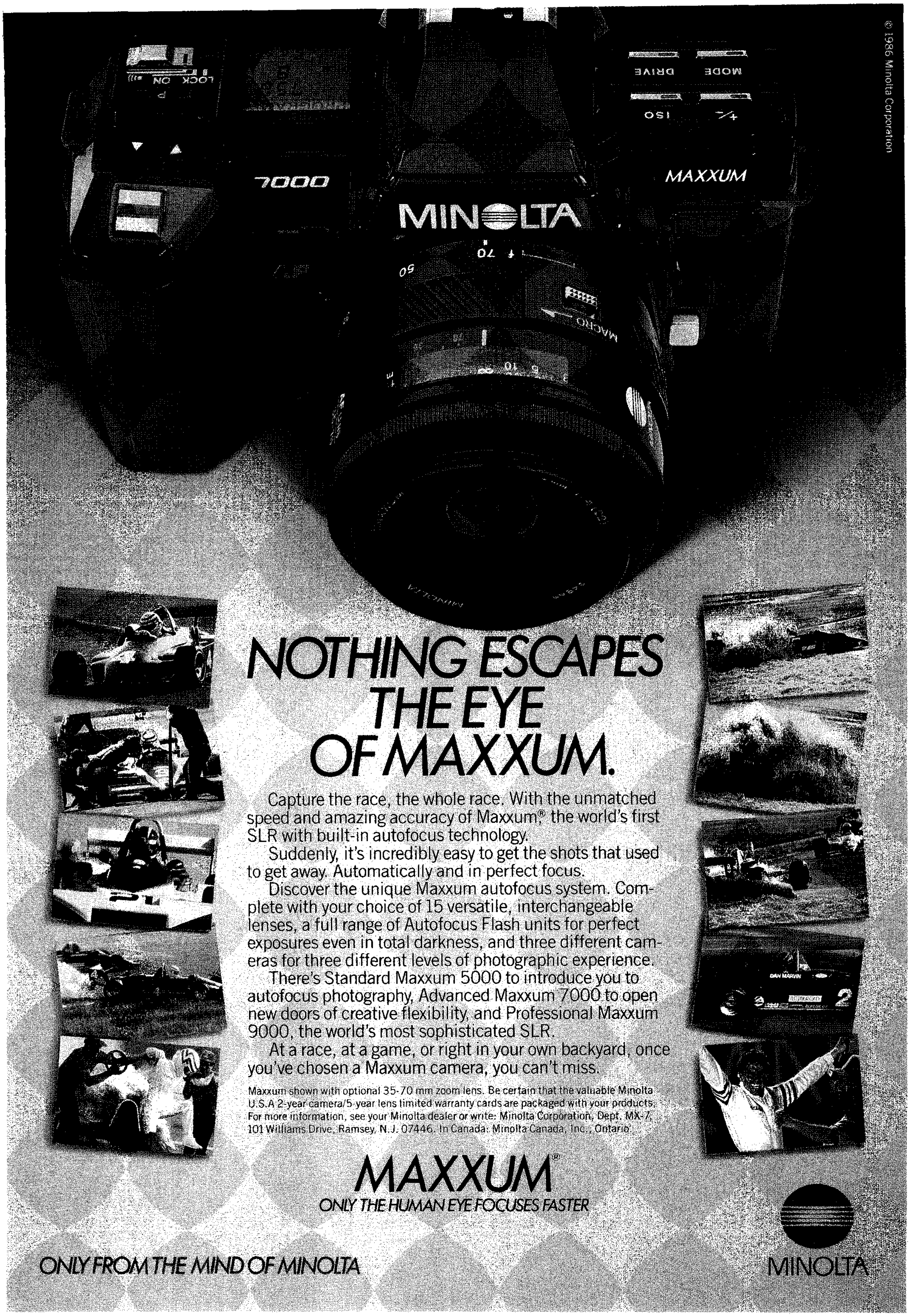
We arrived at the hut—a Quonset-like affair—about two and a half hours after sunset. A large cross had been erected on a plateau just below it. Having spent a substantial amount of time over the years in Alpine refuges in France, Italy, and Switzerland, with their reasonably comfortable and sometimes almost luxurious bunk beds and excellent catered cuisine, I was somewhat taken aback—warnings notwithstanding—by the Las Cruces hut. Inside was nothing except a tiny, rickety table, a few chairs that looked as though they were on the point of collapsing, and, leaning against one wall, some wooden boards, which were to serve as our beds. We set them down on the ice-cold stone floor, and I got my newly purchased sleeping bag out of my rucksack. It was then that I discovered what the Tehuacán, last seen in my canteen, had leaked into. It had formed a freezing pool of purified water in the sleeping bag's interior. I emptied out the bag as best I could, but it had become a dank, lugubrious blue cavern of humid down. As I have noted, the Las Cruces hut is at about fourteen thousand seven hundred feet, and once the sun sets it is cold—very, very cold. There is permanent snow and ice around the hut. The tips of my fingers were beginning to burn with the cold, and putting on a pair of down gloves did not seem to help much. One is taught in the Alps to prevent frostbitten fingers by alternately rubbing them and putting them in one's armpits. I was now engaging in both activities while trembling from head to foot. It looked like the beginning of a grim night.



Two of the *guías* were involved in various culinary activities: Mimo was trying to light the butane stove, and Pedro had gone outside for some snow to be melted for tea and soup. Rodolfo seemed to have vanished in the murk. Needless to say, there was no electricity in the hut, and everyone was groping his way around by flashlight. Suddenly, out of the gloom, Rodolfo appeared with a large plastic beaker, which he handed to me with instructions to drink its contents as quickly as possible. I took a gulp. It was the tequila, of course, which had an oddly sweetish taste—probably reflecting whatever had been in Rodolfo's canteen on prior occasions. I took a couple of additional sips and offered to return the beaker, assuming that we were all to share. Not so. Rodolfo told me to drink the whole thing, since I would need the beaker shortly for my soup. I finished off the tequila, and a remarkable sense of well-being flooded through me. "*Una medicina*," Rodolfo commented. The hut seemed to glow with a warm cheerfulness, and in this mood we finished off some excellent—or so it seemed to me at the time—corn soup, bread, and tea.

Alas, the effect of the tequila was all too short-lived. After dinner, we were faced with the prospect of a long and incredibly uncomfortable night. On the way up, we had discussed the time we should start the climb the next morning, and six o'clock had been tentatively agreed upon. We turned in about nine, and I soon discovered that there was simply no way I could manage to keep warm. I tried every possible permutation of clothing—gloves, ponchos, hats, thermal underwear, extra socks—but no amount of inventiveness helped. The four of us were shivering with cold, occasionally nodding off for a few minutes, only to wake up freezing. Mimo, having given up on the idea of sleep, kept the transistor tuned to Burt Bacharach. I contemplated taking the instrument away from him and throwing it out the door, but I was too cold to crawl out of my damp sleeping bag. The wind came up and started howling under the door of the hut. Sometime—it must have been just before dawn—I heard the sounds of what I took to be large animals scratching at the door. Then it opened, and in walked four other climbers, all Mexicans. They must have started up from Tlamacas at about four in the morning, in order to avoid spending the night up here. In fact, for the next hour or so there was a steady stream of climbers—perhaps twenty or thirty—wandering in and out of the hut. I had once again nodded off when I woke up to the sound of English. Three young *norteamericanos* were engaging in what threatened to be a nasty bilingual argument with my guides. Two of the arrivals—they looked to be in their late twenties—were wearing tennis shoes, and the third had on some sort of street loafers, around which he had improvised various puttee arrangements with plastic bags. Mimo was pointing out that trying to climb Popo with that kind of footgear was stupid and extremely dangerous. As I woke up, he was saying to one of the Americans, who was trying to stare him down, that he, Mimo, did not *own* the mountain but that what he, as a member of the Socorro, was telling the guy was for his own good. The American, to whom I took an instant dislike, responded by saying that he had had "mucho experienceo" in the mountains, citing a climb of Mt. Rainier as proof of his competence. Apart from the fact that anyone with "mucho experienceo" would not approach the climb of a snow-and-ice mountain in street shoes, the notion of bringing up Mt. Rainier in this particular argument struck me as ironic. Mt. Rainier, too, is in a national park, and the park rangers supervise all prospective climbers. Anyone who tried to climb Rainier in tennis shoes would very likely be fined if he was caught. "Mucho experienceo" seemed to be taking this as some sort of machismo challenge, and while Mexicans are among the most amiable people I have ever encountered, many a life has been lost south of the border in machismo challenges. I wondered whether I should do something to try to smooth out the situation, but decided that if I opened my mouth I might make things worse. So I settled for a simpleminded smile, which, considering the hour, the altitude, and the temperature, was not difficult to manage. Finally, the conqueror of Mt. Rainier was persuaded by one of his colleagues to back off, and all three headed down the trail to Tlamacas. After they left, Pedro radioed to Tlamacas that three "gringos"—not a very pleasant expression—were coming down, and that the people below should make sure they got there.

IT was now something like seven o'clock on what promised to be a bright, sunny morning. Pedro called me over to the window of the hut and pointed out Orizaba—a massive white presence eighty miles away. The lateness of the hour reminded me of a morning some years ago when, in the company of my usual Alpine guide, Claude Jaccoux, a group of us arrived—because of the vagaries of the Swiss cog-railroad schedules—at the base of the Mönch at about 8 A.M., a fantastically late hour at which to start a snow-and-ice climb in the Alps. Most are begun at two or three in the morning. Jaccoux muttered darkly something about *les heures espagnoles*—no



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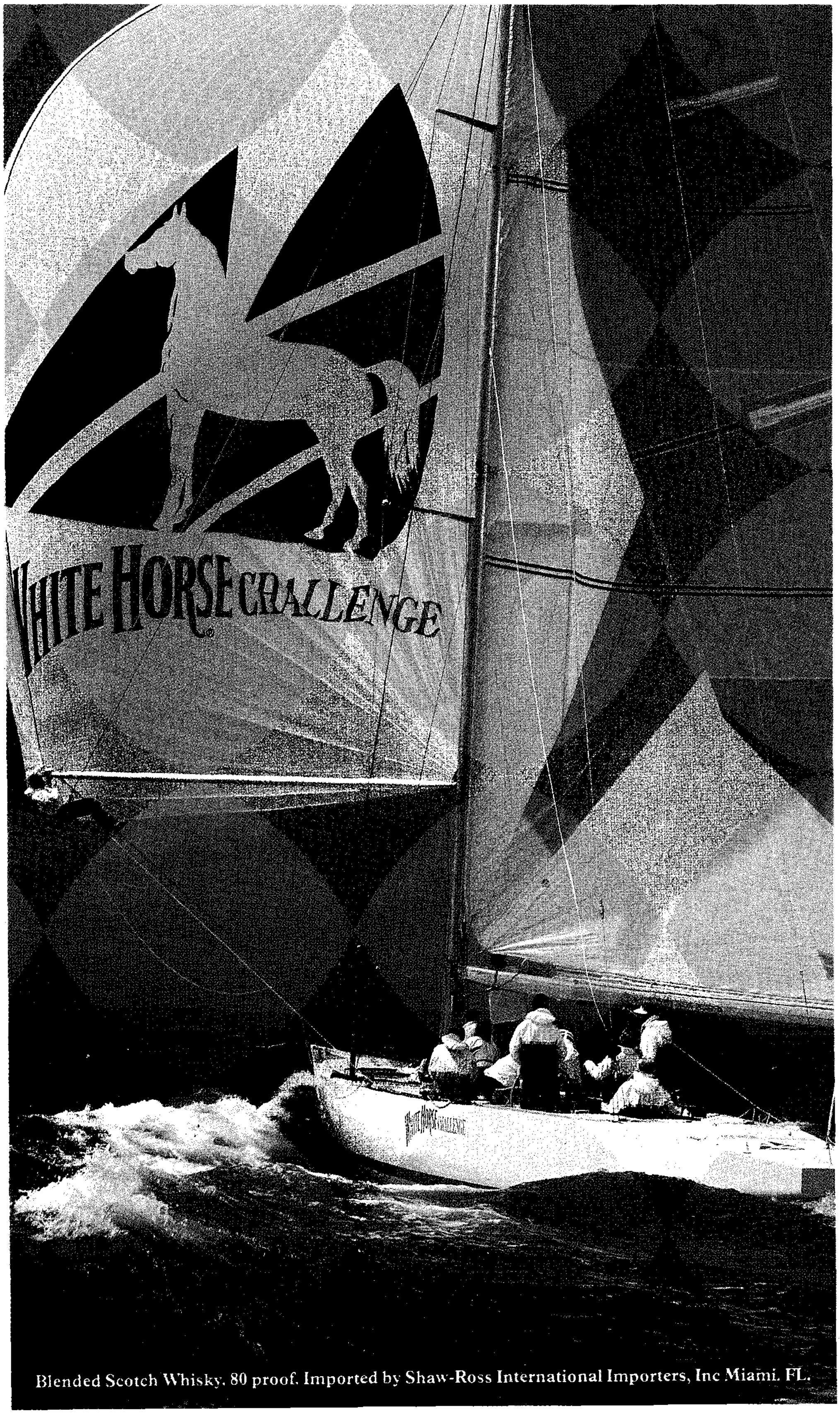

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doubt a reference to the Spanish custom of starting all important activities relatively late in the day. Well, here at Popo we were certainly keeping *les heures espagnoles*, none of the guides showing a great deal of inclination to get out into the snow. I decided that they must know their mountain and must have realized that the good weather would be stable. (In the Alps, it rarely holds for an entire day, which is one of the reasons for the early start.) In any event, after a breakfast of tea, canned fruit salad, and bread, we left the hut at eight o'clock.

The Las Cruces route up Popo is, essentially, one foot after the other. There is no mystery about it. The volcano is a cone, and the cone, plastered in snow and ice, rises at an average angle of thirty degrees—reasonably steep. One simply makes a track straight up until one gets to the top—at least, in theory. However, the first thing that struck me when I looked up the mountain was that it was fairly well covered with climbers—some going up and some coming down—but no one seemed to be getting to the summit. I filed this away as a curious fact and set off with Mimo and Rodolfo. It had been decided that I was to stay in the middle, while one or the other of them led up. After something like three-quarters of an hour, we stopped to put on our crampons. The snow was rather thick, but underneath was a hard surface of ice, which made the crampons a necessity. We trudged on, steadily gaining altitude, which one could pretty well measure by looking over at the summit of Iztaccíhuatl. At about sixteen thousand feet, the altitude began to catch up with me. I started playing those psychological games with myself which are familiar to every high-altitude climber. I would pick out a rock—say, fifty feet away—and promise myself that I would continue climbing until I reached it. After a while, I was reduced to counting steps—something else familiar to climbers at high altitudes. I would make an agreement with myself to go twenty steps—steps that Rodolfo or Mimo had made. If the steps were not even, then I felt entitled to break the agreement and quit after fifteen steps. At this point, my head was spinning, and I would plant the handle of my ice axe in the snow, bend over, and lean on it until things sorted themselves out. I had an all but irresistible urge to sit down in the snow and go to sleep. My brother, who had climbed Popo some years earlier with a group from a mountaineering club at the University of Wisconsin, told me that he was sure he and the rest of the group fell asleep on their ice axes every fifteen steps or so. I remarked to Mimo that a short nap in the snow would be exceedingly nice, and he replied rather forcefully that it would *not* be exceedingly nice but a very good way to get frostbite. Above, either clouds or a plume of steam appeared to be billowing from the lip of the crater. Some climbers passed us on their way down, having stopped—for reasons that still didn't make sense to me—just below the crater.

The lip was no more than thirty or forty feet above us—I had the feeling that a long arm stretch would take us to the top—when, much to my astonishment, Mimo said that the snow conditions had become "*muy peligroso*," and that we were going down. I didn't believe it, until I looked up. The loose snow had completely vanished, and the surface was now pure black ice—as hard as steel, and glinting like crocodile teeth. It was steeper than thirty degrees, and neither crampons nor ice axe could penetrate the surface. A slip might well have taken us to the bottom of the mountain, since there was nothing to stop a fall. Mimo said that these conditions were extremely rare, and that for that reason he had not brought up any ice pitons—steel screws that can be embedded in ice like this to hold a climbing rope. No wonder nobody had gone to the top! In compensation, he offered me a chilled can of grape juice he had brought up in his pack, and I gratefully drank it. We stopped for a few minutes to take in the fantastic view. There was not a cloud in the sky, and the whole high Aztec plain was visible below us.

We headed down. Mimo and Rodolfo stopped to warn all the climbers behind us about the ice, and soon there was a full-scale retreat down the mountain. We reached the Las Cruces hut sometime after noon, to be greeted by Pedro, who had sorted out all our sleeping gear. Some picnickers had come up from the valley, and an enormous Mexican family was making tortillas on a portable stove and stuffing them with spiced meat. Mimo's transistor was still tuned to *la música dulce*, and we left the hut to the strains of "What the World Needs Now Is Love, Sweet Love." A light cloud had settled itself on the summit of the volcano.

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BOOKS

Old World Wickedness

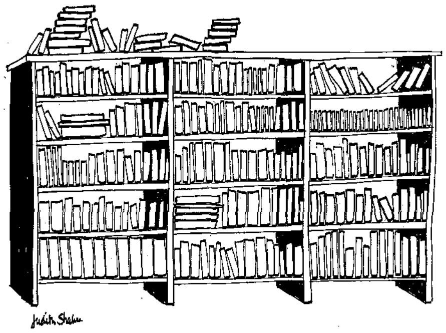
THERE are no monsters like European monsters; they need Gothic nooks and crannies and the icy swirls and trompe-l'oeil of the Baroque to give them their nurture and setting. Patrick Süskind's "Perfume: The Story of a Murderer" (translated from the German by John E. Woods; Knopf; $16.95) takes place in a beautifully researched yet fancifully ominous eighteenth-century France; its monstrous hero, Jean-Baptiste Grenouille, is born in July of 1738 into the redolence of the Cimetière des Innocents in Paris—"the most putrid spot in the whole kingdom." This is a fragrant era:

> In the period of which we speak, there reigned in the cities a stench barely conceivable to us modern men and women. The streets stank of manure, the courtyards of urine, the stairwells stank of moldering wood and rat droppings, the kitchens of spoiled cabbage and mutton fat; the unaired parlors stank of stale dust, the bedrooms of greasy sheets, damp featherbeds, and the pungently sweet aroma of chamber pots. The stench of sulfur rose from the chimneys, the stench of caustic lyes from the tanneries, and from the slaughterhouses came the stench of congealed blood. People stank of sweat and unwashed clothes; from their mouths came the stench of rotting teeth, from their bellies that of onions, and from their bodies, if they were no longer very young, came the stench of rancid cheese and sour milk and tumorous disease. The rivers stank, the marketplaces stank, the churches stank, it stank beneath the bridges and in the palaces.

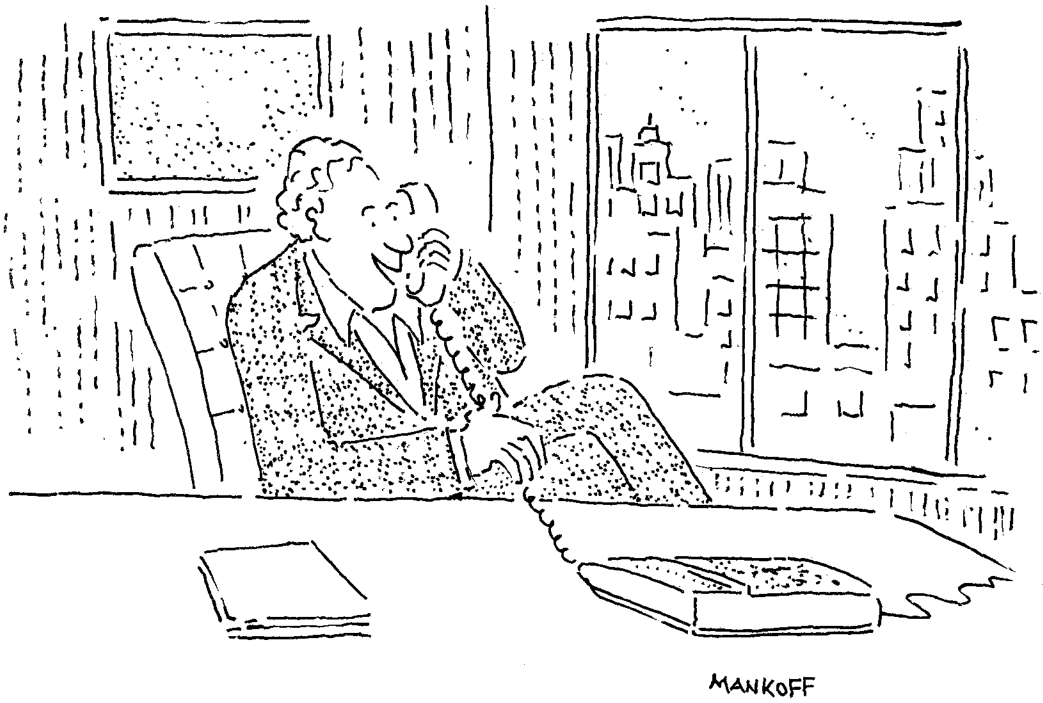
Amid this crush of odor, the infant, delivered by his reluctant mother beneath the gutting table of a fish stall, is twice freakish: he himself is odorless, and (it will develop) his own sense of smell is preternaturally keen. A kind of olfactory Superman, he rises from this humblest of beginnings amid the fish offal to become the greatest perfumer in the world and from there to distill out of the aromas of slain adolescent beauties a perfume so captivating that its wearer could rule the world.

Could, but of course does not, for history, until this brilliant fable by a young Munich playwright and former musician, bears no trace of Grenouille, whom the author ranks, for moral deformity, with de Sade and Saint-Just and Napoleon. Like the creator of any superman, Mr. Süskind has some trouble generating significant obstacles to his hero's progress: with his fabulous nose, Grenouille can detect a thread of scent a half mile away, can sniff his way through the dark, can mix masterly perfumes with the ease of Mozart scribbling divine melodies, and in the end can subject an enormous crowd to his will. He also, we are asked to believe, can entertain himself for seven years of utterly eremitic life in a cave on an extinct volcano, drugging himself with symphonies of remembered scent. True, he is a superman fearfully handicapped at the outset; since his refusal to die at birth exposes his mother's previous successful attempts at infanticide, she is soon beheaded, and the orphan is cast on the mercy of a world that finds his bent body, inarticulate speech, and lack of human scent repulsive. Though his name means "frog" in French, the tick—"the lonely tick, which, wrapped up in itself, huddles in its tree, blind, deaf, and dumb, and simply sniffs, *sniffs all year long, for miles around,* for the blood of some passing animal that it could never reach on its own power"—is the creaturely image most frequently associated with Grenouille as he and his monstrous talent mature under a succession of harsh caretakers and taskmasters. The casual squalor and brutality of ordinary eighteenth-century life form one of the tale's subtexts, and its opening portrait of the crowded, smelly, disease-ridden ferment of Paris ("Paris produced over ten thousand new foundlings, bastards, and orphans a year") plausibly blends with its unfolding savageries.

The authenticity, never labored, of the historical background, and the fascinating elucidation of the procedures of perfume-making, as revealed first in a Paris shop and laboratory and then in the essence-extracting cottage industry of Grasse, carry us quite pleasurably along. The writing has the light-handed authority of Mr. Süskind's fellow-Münchner Thomas Mann, and John E. Woods has produced a translation of exceptional energy and grace. The reconstruction of the world in terms of scent is a charming tour de force. Babies, we learn from a wet nurse, have a variety of smells: "Their feet, for instance, they smell like a smooth, warm stone—or no, more like curds . . . or like butter, like fresh butter . . . And their bodies smell like . . . like a griddle cake that's been soaked in milk. And their heads, up on top, at the back of the head, where the hair makes a cowlick . . . is where they smell best of all. It smells like caramel." For Grenouille, smells are subtle and numerous beyond reckoning: there is "the odor of glass, the clayey, cool odor of smooth glass," and the "cool, musty, brawny smell" of a brass doorknob, and the "moist, fresh, tallowy, and a bit pungent" aroma of a dog. His murderous activities have to do with capturing the delicate scent a very young woman exudes, which has "a freshness, but not the freshness of limes or pomegranates, not the freshness of myrrh or cinnamon bark or curly mint or birch or camphor or pine needles, nor that of a May rain or a frosty wind or of well water . . . and at the same time it had warmth, but not as bergamot, cypress, or musk has, or jasmine or daffodils, not as rosewood has or iris. . . . This scent was a blend of both, of evanescence and substance, not a blend, but a unity, although slight and frail as well, and yet solid and sustaining, like a piece of thin, shimmering silk . . . and yet again not like silk, but like pastry soaked in honey-sweet milk." Generally, Grenouille hates the smell of human beings; fleeing Paris, he travels by night to avoid this oppressive effluvium, which pervades most of the world. "There were humans in the most remote regions. They had only pulled back like rats into their lairs to sleep. The earth was not cleansed of them, for even in sleep they exuded their odor, which then forced its way out between the cracks of their dwellings and into the open air, poisoning a natural world only apparently left to its own devices."



Another subtext of "Perfume," and perhaps the major one, is Sartre's aphorism that hell is other people. People stink, nauseatingly; when Grenouille, to help give himself a human personality and presence, mixes up the odor



"Stan baby, Dave baby here."

• •

normal people have, "the scent of humanness," his ingredients are half a teaspoon of cat excrement, "still rather fresh," plus vinegar, salt, and some decomposing cheese. Then: "From the lid of a sardine tub that stood at the back of the shop, he scratched off a rancid, fishy something-or-other, mixed it with rotten egg and castoreum, ammonia, nutmeg, horn shavings, and singed pork rind, finely ground. To this he added a relatively large amount of civet, mixed these ghastly ingredients with alcohol, let it digest, and filtered it into a second bottle. The bilge smelled revolting." Wearing dabs of this complex concoction, overlaid with perfume, he ventures into the street, timidly, "because he could not imagine that other people would not also perceive his odor as a stench." They do not. For the first time in his existence, he is favorably noticed; he exerts an effect on people; he casts a proper, customary olfactory shadow. Seldom since Gulliver described the Brobdingnagian women from up close ("They would often strip me naked from top to toe, and lay me at full length in their bosoms; wherewith I was much disgusted; because, to say the truth, a very offensive smell came from their skins") has our bodily being been the object of such merciless comedy. Along with the existential nausea is the proposition, borne out by modern scientific studies, that we are more sensitive and responsive to odors than we realize—that the great buried language of smell is still being spoken, subconsciously, by our brains. Whether that language is loud enough to carry instantly to the back of a great crowd and disarm ten thousand people of their reason seems unlikely but, in a land and city mesmerized within living man's memory by the unprepossessing Hitler, perhaps worth imagining.

Having invented his monster and run him through society like a hot knife through butter, Mr. Süskind doesn't quite know how to finish him off, short of calling in armies; the ending is the weakest part, an abrupt and bitter whiff capping a delicious book. "Perfume" slightly disconcerts us in being, like Grenouille's fabrication of human odor, so bluntly a concoction: it seems a fiction in which all personal and involuntary elements have been sublimated, a book that animates, with readily summoned erudition and flair, only its ideas. It is characteristically cavalier of Mr. Süskind, in framing his fable, to assign his hero two physiologically quite unrelated extreme attributes—a superkeen sense of smell, which pertains to the olfactory membrane high in the nose, and an utter lack of body odor, which the skin and the glands generate. We close the book with the presumably postmodern sensation of having been twitted. Calvino's fantasies, though more genial, leave something of this same impression, as does Umberto Eco's "The Name of the Rose"—that of an adroit and dazzling playing at novel-writing, which has become, in our age of deconstruction, a smaller art than it used to be, a trick almost contemptibly well within an intelligent man's reach.

VLADIMIR NABOKOV was an inveterate concocter, who patterned his fictions on chess puzzles and butterfly wings, footnoted poems and scrambled maps. But also at work was a live personal impulse, which flared out in projected emotion, were it in the form of a pervert's misplaced love or an exile's hopeless grief. He dictated "The Enchanter" (translated from the Russian by Dmitri Nabokov; Putnam; $16.95) to his wife in Paris, late in 1939, six months before sailing to America and leaving his European phase of exile behind. One "blue-papered wartime night," he stated in the afterword to "Lolita," Nabokov read this long story aloud to a small group of friends; "but I was not pleased with the thing and destroyed it sometime after moving to America." A copy, however, showed up when he and his wife, with their repacked trunks, were returning to Europe in 1959, and he wrote to G. P. Putnam's Sons, his publisher, that it was "a beautiful piece of Russian prose, precise and lucid, and with a little care could be done into English by the Nabokovs." The idea was not pursued, and the manuscript settled back into its trunk, to surface yet again in the early eighties, in the course of bibliographical researches conducted in the wake of the author's death, in 1977. Now, at last, having first been run through a French edition, "The Enchanter" has been published in English, perhaps the final significant piece of the Nabokov oeuvre to fit into place—though the unfinished novel, "The Original of Laura," is still out there somewhere.

"The Enchanter" arrives in the reflected glow of "Lolita," and does, like it, begin with a middle-aged man's passion for a twelve-year-old girl. Its nameless heroine is first seen in a Paris park, on roller skates—"skates that did not roll but crunched on the

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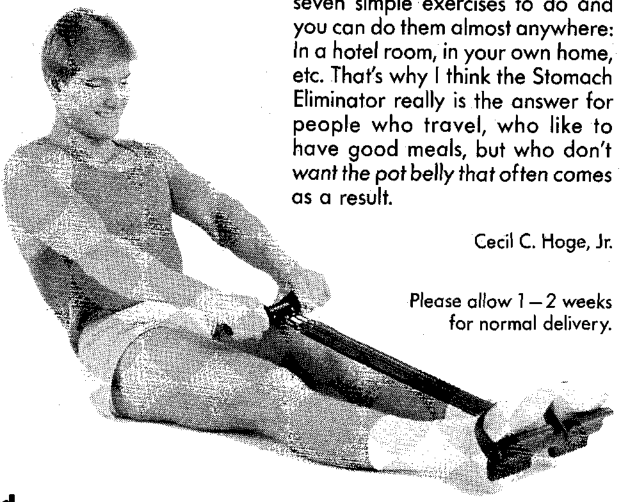

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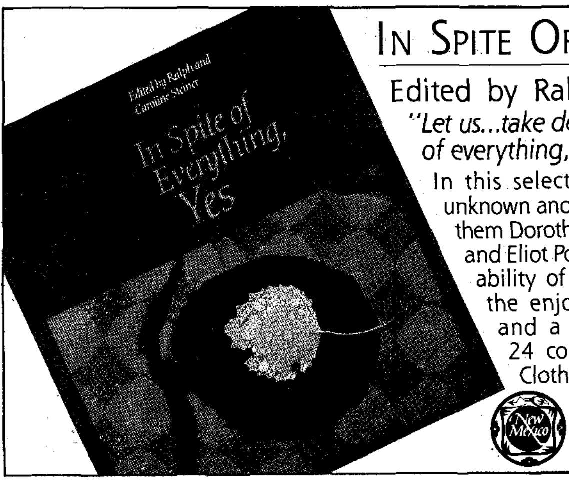
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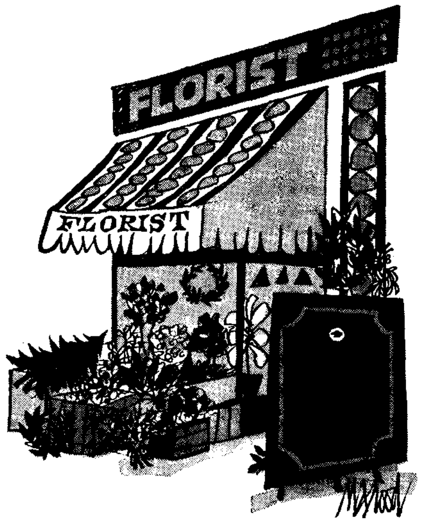
gravel as she raised and lowered them with little Japanese steps and approached his bench through the variable luck of the sunlight." The nameless hero (whom Nabokov remembered as being called Arthur and hailing from central Europe) is a rather pale monster, though at one point, we are told, he "flashed a tusk from beneath a bluish lip" and at another, as if with Grenouille's nose, he notes "the rancid emanations of . . . wilted skin." His profession, several times coyly alluded to, might be that of diamond-cutter. Unlike Humbert Humbert, in "Lolita," he is not the narrator of his love story, but we are made intimately privy to his heavy-breathing observations of the nymphet's "large, slightly vacuous eyes, somehow suggesting translucent gooseberries," "the summery tint of her bare arms with the sleek little foxlike hairs running along the forearms; the indistinct tenderness of her still narrow but already not quite flat chest," the way in which "her dress clung so closely in back that it outlined a small cleft," her "rosy, sharp-knuckled hands, on which shifted now a vein, now a deep dimple near the wrist," "the exact way the checks of her dress . . . tightened when she raised an arm," "the soft skin of her underside and the tiny wedge of her taut panties," and even "the tiny flecks of dandruff" in the "silky vertex" of her head. She is never more than the sum of such details, however, since events contrive to keep her elsewhere even when her admirer marries her mother. When the stepfather and the child are at last thrown together (by the mother's death, as in "Lolita") nothing happens equivalent to the complex and robust mixture of seductiveness, defiance, filial dependence, and comradely cockiness with which Dolores Haze meets Humbert Humbert's desire. The great superiority of "Lolita" to "The Enchanter" resides, above all, in the rich character of Lolita—her Americanness, her toughness, her resilience, her touching childishness as it shades erratically into treacherous womanhood. The pedophilia of "The Enchanter" seems nastier for having a limp and silent body as its object. The courtship of the mother seems grimmer than the acquiescent conquest of crass Charlotte Haze, and her death sadder. The hero's lust is less ethereal and more genital, and there is not the relieving circumstantiality, in the vague France of "The Enchanter," of the novel's amazingly and uproariously well-observed Americana. And the redeeming, splendid, headlong, endlessly comic and evocative English of "Lolita"—the apologetic and manic voice of Humbert Humbert—has no equal in this translation, though there are indications that the original Russian was heavily worked, toward a feverish jocosity that might make its central topic palatable. Nabokov may have been knowingly wrapping up, with a terminal flamboyance, his days as a Russian writer; already, while still in France, he had composed his first English-language novel, "The Real Life of Sebastian Knight."

During the author's lifetime, his son, Dmitri, born in Germany but raised in the United States, was his best translator of the Russian works into English, producing versions that additionally benefitted from the paternal author's extra touches and refinements. Here Dmitri had to work with an abandoned text whose "virtuosity," he says in his afterword (or "postface," as he puts it), "consists in a deliberate vagueness of verbal and visual elements" and wherein "VN, were he alive, might have exercised his authorial license to change certain details." In a few spots (such as the "high-speed imagery of the finale," which comes through smashingly) the translator has dared venture away from "a totally literal rendering" that would have been "meaningless in English." Often enough, the English version feels strained and even unintelligible:

> Raising drawbridges might be an effective system of protection until such time as the flowering chasm itself reached up to the chamber with a robust young branch.
>
> Never before, though, had the subordinate clause of his fearsome life been com-



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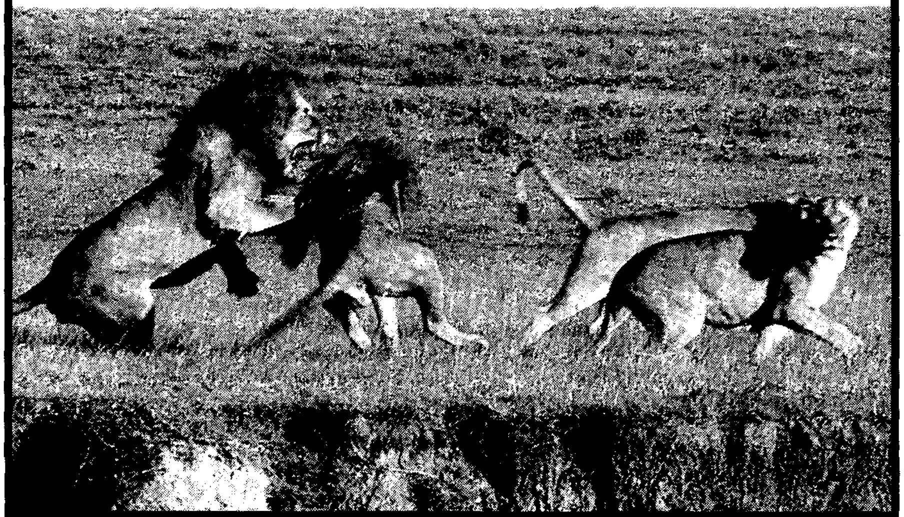

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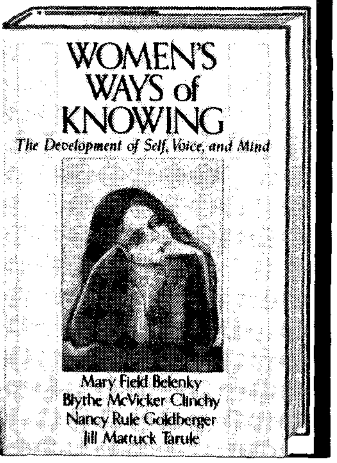

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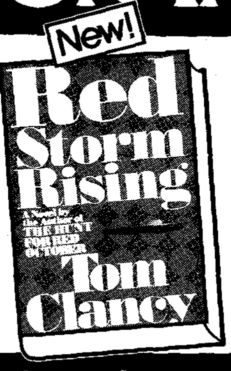

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> plemented by the principal one, and he walked past with clenched teeth . . .
>
> *He felt both sorry and repelled but,* realizing that the material, apart from its one specific function, had no potential whatever, he kept doggedly at his chore . . .

In this last instance, the protagonist is drinking tea and looking at some snapshots of his wife-to-be, and perhaps "material" isn't quite the word, since it seems as applicable to tea as to snapshots. One doesn't know how much to blame the translator's very Nabokovian insistence on rigorous fidelity or the author's Nabokovian fondness for "double- and triple-bottomed imagery" that may ripple through the Russian but rather clots the derived English. Dmitri elucidates some "compressed images and locutions" in his afterword, as well as indignantly repelling some recent trespassers upon his father's reputation; but "precise and lucid" seem odd words to describe "The Enchanter." Not only is there a fog of namelessness and verbal overload but ambiguity enshrouds such turns of plot as whether or not the hero sleeps with his bride on the wedding night and whether or not he goes into a pharmacy to buy poison for her.

"The Enchanter," in short, is a squirmy work whose basic idea was tenacious enough to inspire a masterpiece on another continent a decade later. It is remembered, in "Lolita," by the name of the hotel, The Enchanted Hunters, where Humbert and Lolita first sleep together. Or, rather, she sleeps while he stays awake, in one of the most beautifully described of the many insomnias in Nabokov:

> My pillow smelled of her hair. I moved toward my glimmering darling, stopping or retreating every time I thought she stirred or was about to stir. A breeze from wonderland had begun to affect my thoughts, and now they seemed couched in italics, as if the surface reflecting them were wrinkled by the phantasm of that breeze. Time and again my consciousness folded the wrong way, my shuffling body entered the sphere of sleep, shuffled out again, and once or twice I caught myself drifting into a melancholy snore. Mists of tenderness enfolded mountains of longing. Now and then it seemed to me that the enchanted prey was about to meet halfway the enchanted hunter, that her haunch was working its way toward me under the soft sand of a remote and fabulous beach; and then her dimpled dimness would stir, and I would know she was farther away from me than ever.

In the same bedded situation where these magical sentences evoke the drifting Tristan and his underage Iseult, "The Enchanter" has its cruel, obscene, and cacophonous climax. The transformation is one of the miracles of modern fiction.

—JOHN UPDIKE

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

ONE BIG BED, by John Krich (McGraw-Hill; $16.95). Six sophomoric dreamers—would-be Maoists and Wobblies—collectivize their bedrolls and mattresses in a California commune just as the Age After the Age of Aquarius dawns. This rueful reminiscence, prompted and framed by a potluck barbecue celebrating the tenth anniversary of their arrest on Bastille Day, 1969, is narrated by the most serious of the six, now a movie critic with a soft spot for flashbacks, who adopts cinematic devices—scriptlike instructions to the camera crew as well as screenplaylike voice-overs and dialogue—to reconstruct the postures and rifts of a collective-that-was-six-collectives. John Krich proves to be a witty, fluent writer, pausing now and then for a bluesy lament about suburban blight or for a hundred-and-fifty-word, one-sentence tour of a fast-food franchise's stomach-turning machinery.

THE ALL OF IT, by Jeannette Haien (Godine; $14.95). On a rainy Irish morning, a priest, fishing for salmon, casts his first lure of the day and begins to mull over a story that has left him feeling flattered and troubled, because it was confided, not confessed: a story that began about fifty years before, "up Donegal way," with a boy and a girl who became obliged to allow the world to mistake them for husband and wife. Jeannette Haien, a pianist, whose fine first novel this is, tunes words, as it were, to offer subtly skewed perceptions; her nouns include "teem," "scud," "laze," and "drench" ("a kestrel sitting in the drench of the sky"), and her verbs include "arrow," "burr," "ghost," and "yonder" (a dead man's face, "moon-like, yondered truly"). Sometimes the story swings with a folkloric logic. Sometimes it plumbs a resonant exchange, such as this one: "'You look done in,' she prompted him gently. Mired in sorrow, he answered, 'I am.'"

GENERAL

SHIELDING THE FLAME: AN INTIMATE CONVERSATION WITH DR.

MAREK EDELMAN, THE LAST SURVIVING LEADER OF THE WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING, by Hanna Krall, translated from the Polish by Joanna Stasinska and Lawrence Weschler (Holt; $13.95). In his youth, Marek Edelman led the Jewish rebellion against the Nazis, and he later became a leader of Solidarity. In the intervening years, he practiced cardiology unnoticed in Poland. In 1976, an interview with Dr. Edelman by Hanna Krall was published in a Polish literary journal. His stubborn modesty, his vocation of saving lives, and his exceptionally precise memories began a Polish reconsideration of the national past and an appreciation of the Jewish contribution to it. Ever since, despite his disclaimers, he has been treated as both a Polish and a Jewish hero. On the fortieth anniversary of the ghetto uprising, having refused to participate in commemorative ceremonies sponsored by the government that had suppressed Solidarity, Dr. Edelman was under house arrest. At the center of this volume are his recollections of the battle in the ghetto, of his fellow-resistants, and of details of daily life in Warsaw under the Nazis. He believes that the decision to die fighting was not more courageous than dying in the gas chambers: "The only undignified death is when one attempts to survive at the expense of somebody else."

TRUMAN, by Roy Jenkins (Harper & Row; $17.95). The author, a long-serving Labour M.P. who helped found Britain's Social Democratic Party, has written several notable studies of English politics and political figures, and has a feeling for politics which observers rarely gain. This biography appraises a host of matters, from the Truman family's social standing to the tacit agreements that defined American party politics in the Truman era. Mr. Jenkins ranks Truman very high among American Presidents—and, indeed, among world statesmen—because of his foreign policy. He does not maintain that Truman was always right when he acted on the international scene, but his narrative enables us to appreciate how well Truman chose among alternative policies. Mr. Jenkins' account of Truman's decisions pays due attention to the contributions of the President's advisers and of his op-

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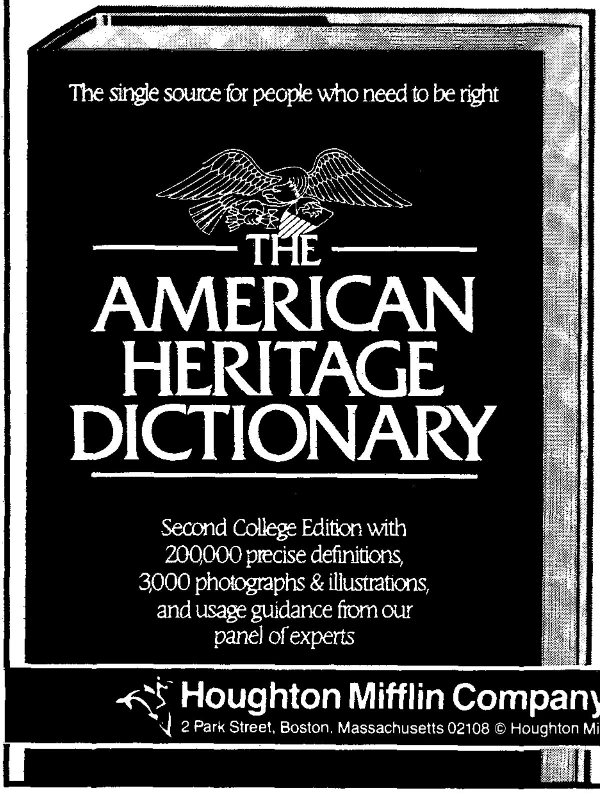
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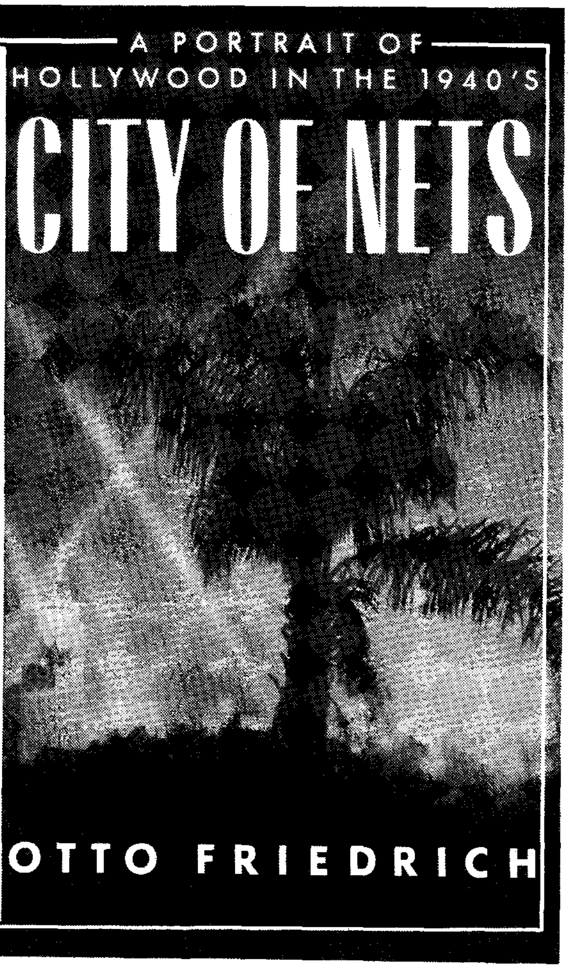

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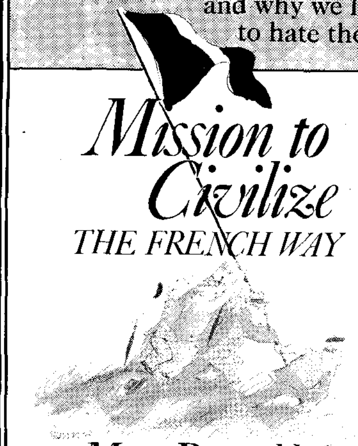

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ponents, and notes, by the way, similarities and divergences between the American and the British versions of representative democracy.

On Acting, by Laurence Olivier (Simon & Schuster; $18.95). A reminiscent ramble and a treatise on the craft of acting. Olivier is instructive and amusing when he discusses his successes and his flops; the fine points of makeup; the way he realized his great roles, like Richard III and Henry V, or Archie Rice in "The Entertainer," or James Tyrone in "Long Day's Journey Into Night;" and what he has discovered over the years about directing plays. He also has some good and astringent things to say to young actors—"Get a classical training"—and about the tendency of actors today to exalt themselves as artists: " 'Interpreter' is all stern judgment allows us; 'artist' must be a rarely justified boast." The book is filled with anecdotes of Olivier's colleagues in the theatre (Sir Ralph Richardson and Sir John Gielgud in particular) and of his work in London, on Broadway, and in Hollywood. Scores of photographs.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

Heartless, by Stephen Paul Cohen (Morrow; $15.95). Eddie Margolis is a young alcoholic living in squalor on the lower East Side. When he calls on a friend, a young junkie named Tony Santucci, one midnight and finds him dead, murdered, in his pad, he swears off the booze and dedicates himself (successfully) to finding out who did it and why. If we can believe this, then Mr. Cohen's first novel is good entertainment, with plenty of sickening local color, plenty of action, plenty of tricky plotting, and good writing in the well-worn tough-guy manner.

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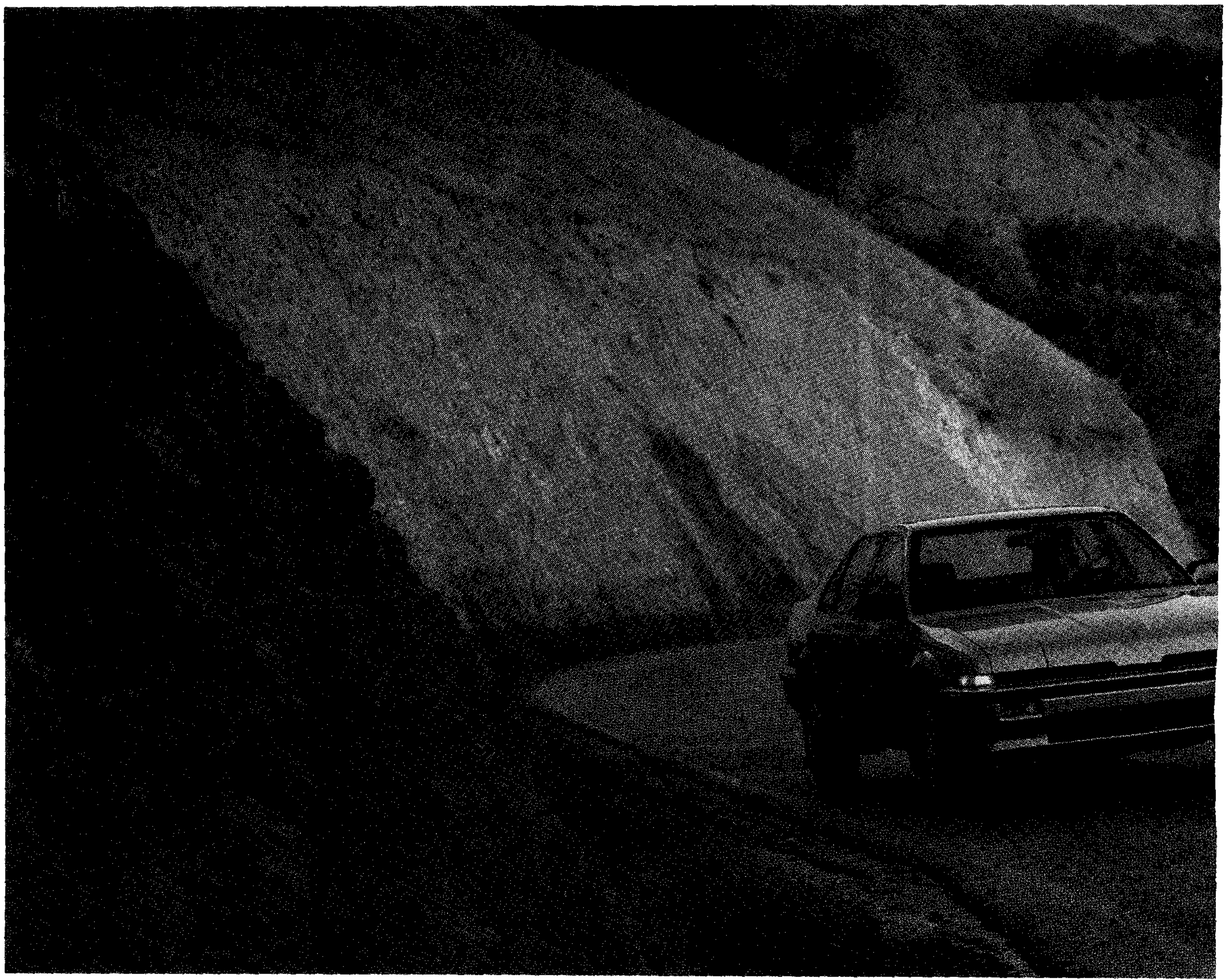

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